Social Accountability in Action

Illustrations of PRAN's work in Nepal

2009-2012

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Preface

The World Bank is enthusiastic about social accountability (SA) as a mechanism for improving governance, and, using funds from the State and Peace Building Trust Fund, has, in Nepal set up the PRAN program in Nepal with this in mind. To date, the Bank has given a lot of attention to the supply side of improving governance, assisting the government to improve public financial management, civil service, procurement and the like, but recognizes that more needs to be done on the demand side.

The demand side (or social accountability) refers to a process of strengthening the ability of citizens, CSOs, and other non-state actors to work with governments to hold them accountable and responsible for laws and regulations that have been passed (but often not implemented or executed) and encouraging them to be fully transparent and responsive to citizen's needs.

This is the first effort of this kind in Nepal by the World Bank and is somewhat of a pilot[1]: the outcome (according to the original project paper), is meant to be:

> *A civil society sector with a considerable array of Social Accountability skills and a good knowledge of Socccountability tools that would enable CSOs to engage actively and effectively in holding public agencies accountable. The impact would be improved public service delivery, reduced corruption, and greater transparency and responsiveness among government agencies to citizens and hence improved development outcomes[2].*

This illustrative report shows that this indeed can be achieved: it is based on the work of 19 CSOs working in many VDCs (Village Development Committees) in 25 very different Municipalities and Districts, using 15 different kinds of social accountability mechanisms in three themes[3]. The report will, I hope, stimulate much thought about how social accountability works in practice and how the demonstration work of PRAN can be replicated and expanded to achieve the overall impact desired.

The audience for this document is:

a. The World Bank – both those concerned with social accountability, and those responsible for improving governance in Nepal
b. Development partners, INGOs, and CSOs interested in learning more about social accountability, working on the demand side, and improving governance.

This report does not aim to be a rigorous impact evaluation from a third party, or a value for money study – that is a different task. This illustrative report suggests, from a very small

[1] Existing work in Nepal in the field of social accountability has been carried out through CSOs with funding from DFID, SDC, Action Aid, CARE, and OXFAM. The Government of Nepal carried out its own attempts at social accountability through LGAF (Local Governance Affiliated Fund) – which was part of the multi donor supported LGCDP, but this was closed down.

[2] See PROD Project Proposal Sept 2009, Social Development Department, World Bank. PRAN was originally called PROD – it changed its name in Oct 2010.

[3] The total number of sub-grantees was 29 – this report provides a sample

(though representative) sample, how social accountability works, and how it can be applied in Nepal through Nepali CSOs, working with the agencies of local government. It looks at what has been achieved by 19 Nepali CSOs using a variety of social accountability tools working in the three themes of Public Financial Management, Public Service Delivery, and Municipal Good Governance.

The Report has been constructed in two parts; (a) an introduction which sets the scene and describes the context of the work, followed by (b) 19 double sided descriptions of the work of the sub-grantees ("Social Accountability in Action") which turn are followed by a list of the products of the sub-grantees for those who would like to access more specific information. The 2 pagers can be used independently as fliers or handouts.

This report describes what has been achieved by PRAN from Oct 2010 until October 2012. PRAN was subsequently, in Sept 2012, given an extension and additional funding to continue its existing work until Dec 2013, and then was given another grant, but specifically only for Public Financial Management Reform, from the Nepal Multi Donor Trust Fund to run until Jun 2014, with an expected extension and additional funding to Jun 2015. This report, therefore, only describes PRAN's work until Oct 2012. Lessons need to be learnt from these 19 experiences to inform the extensions.

This report has been compiled from information that has been sent from the sub-grantees to CECI (the PRAN INGO partner responsible for Grants). For those who would like more information on the work of these CSOs, the following information is available at PRAN :

1. Grant Agreements between CECI and sub-grantees
2. Mid Term Reviews
3. Project Completion reports
4. Illustrative case studies
5. Briefs on the use of tools
6. Products from the project (e.g. radio scripts, results of surveys, results of PETS etc)

If social accountability is to be used more widely in Nepal, it is important that existing knowledge about its use is made widely available. A first step is this report. There is also "An Inventory of Social Accountability Tools used in Nepal" available from PRAN which provides titles of information from previous projects and programs.

This document is not an official publication of the World Bank, Nepal. It is produced privately by the Director of the PRAN project between 2010-2012 in order to illustrate how social accountability is practiced.

The Background to "Social Accountability in Action"

The Context and the Problems

This report refers to the particular situation in Nepal in 2013 in relation to the social contract between citizens and government – particularly local government[4]. The Government of Nepal (GoN) has passed, in Parliament and subsequently in the Constitutional Assembly, some very fine laws, policies, statutes and regulations to govern the social contract. Indeed if all these laws etc. were implemented, there would be little need for social accountability. The problem is that they are not implemented, and, as a result, women, poor and excluded (WPEs) do not receive the services that they should by right - and moreover, do not know what their rights or entitlements are. As a result of this is that they do not ask for them. A lot of the work of the 19 CSOs is thus concerned with making the citizens rights and entitlements known to citizens (particularly the WPEs), and then helping them to access these rights and entitlements.

This breakdown in the social contract rests on top of (and is possibly caused by) a society that is deeply riven by caste, class, and ethnicity. Those in government responsible for providing the rights and entitlements to the citizenry, are largely educated upper caste men who are not immediately motivated to help uneducated lower caste women and other marginalized people, even though the law not only says that they can, but actively encourages them to do so.

And in a layer on top of this again is the situation of local government[5], specifically:

- peoples representatives for local government have not been elected for 12 years,
- a hybrid formation called the All Party Mechanism was put into practice to replace this vacuum, until it was declared absolutely corrupt by the CIAA and disbanded in July 2012,
- corruption at national and local levels is endemic and supported by impunity[6].

PRAN has found that it is possible, though difficult, to:

- inform WPEs of their rights and entitlements,

[4] An overall picture of how Local Government works can be found from the relevant laws, particularly the Local Good Governance Act of 2006 , a book published by Action Aid called "Local Democracy Building – Civic Education Resource Book" in Nepali and English in 2009, and a book published by PRAN in 2012 called "A Sourcebook of 21 Social Accountability Tools for Nepal" in English and Nepali.

[5] An explanation of the situation of Local Government is best found in" Political Economy Analysis of Local Governance in Nepal", Asia Foundation, Nepal, 2012

[6] There are a number of reference books on corruption in Nepal - the aforementioned "Political Economy Analysis of Local Governance in Nepa"l, the report for NORAD by Sarah Dix called "Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Nepal – lessons learnt and possible future initiatives" of 2011, and the National Planning Commission's study on corruption in social security payments "Assessment of Social Security Allowance Program in Nepal", May 2012.

- inform and educate government officials of what they should already know – these same rights and entitlements,
- and bring these together in a constructive engagement whereby government officials recognize the citizens right to demand their entitlements, and are prepared to accommodate these demands.

The entitlements are based on three categories:

(a) the use of the block grants from central government to DDCs, and from DDCs to VDCs and Municipalities
(b) the use of social security payments to individuals from the VDC and the Municipality
(c) the involvement of the citizens, through the Ward Citizens Forums in participatory planning and budgeting, firstly in Village Development Committees (VDCs) or Municipalities, and then in District Development Committees (DDCs) .

It is important to be clear that social accountability is not a new concept to the Government of Nepal. The Government had incorporated Public Hearings and Public Audits into its procedures, and made them mandatory for infrastructure projects. The government also has extensive instructions for involving citizens in participatory planning and participatory budgeting of local government through the Good Governance Act. However, as the sub-grantees reported, these instructions are often ignored, or hijacked by political parties, something that was noted in the Asia Foundation report. This document also shows occasions when local government realizes and appreciates what it has not done, and is prepared to improve the situation.

How did this social accountability program work?

The CSOs interested in practicing social accountability made a competitive bid in response to a call for proposals from CECI, naming which of the three themes they wanted to pursue, and which social accountability tool they wanted to practice. They competed for two sizes of projects – up to $15,000 for organizations which had recently received training in SA and wanted to practice what they had learnt, and up to $50,000 for organisations which already had some SA experience and wanted to expand it. Each project lasted between 6-10 months – please see the table following. Please also see the list and the number of uses of the different tools.

What usually happened is that the CSO made a courtesy visit to the offices of local government, informed them what they intended to do, and got their agreement to it. In some cases the CSO was already well known to the Local Government, e.g. VDRC in Nawalparasi (page 65) which already had a long history of helping schools with libraries. In other cases the CSO had to introduce itself, as well as the planned project. In many cases the initial agreement from the Local Government was not an issue, but became an issue later when the Local Government found out that the CSO's practice of the SA tools exposed their wrongdoing and caused them embarrassment.

The next stage was usually that the CSO introduced the concept of SA to the citizenry of whatever area they were covering. This was novel inasmuch as most CSOs were known for

their service delivery – and SA did not mean delivering new services, but getting the government to deliver services which they should have already delivered. This stage involved a considerable amount of discussions, and the holding of meetings. In many cases the CSO held public meetings at which it urged the citizens to ask for accountability from the government agencies – something that not many citizens were used to doing, and were often apprehensive about.

The next stage was often the collection of data, and the production of a report to the local government agencies which showed what had not been done, which should have been done, followed by discussions to try and get commitment from the Local Government to right the wrongs of the past. In quite a few cases the Local government bodies were not aware of the laws and regulations that bound them, and were surprised about what they had to do. In other cases they denied wrongdoing until the facts were incontrovertible. In some cases both parties came to consensus about what needed to be done, in other cases it was more confrontational, as in the work of Sahara Nepal in Bahjang (Page 62) where popular pressure resulted in repayment of NRPs 240,000 which had been wrongly taken from the block grant for women's empowerment, and according to the VDC, used to build schools, something doubted by the citizens.

Table 1, below, shows the CSOs, with their district of registration, the themes they decided to work on, the size of the grant they received, and the length of time they to spend it in. Table 2 shows the Tools that the CSOs used in order of frequency of use.

Table 1: Organisations, Districts, Size of Grants and Duration of Grants used

Organisation (in alphabetical order, with District)	District of Registration	Theme	Money ($)/ Time
Abhiyan Nepal	Sunsari	MGG	43,372 /10 m
Community Communications Centre	Kaski	PFM	10,967 / 6 m
Deep Jyoti Youth Club	Baglung	PFM	33,512 / 6 m
Feminist Dalit Organisation	Lalitpur	PSD	48,487 /10 m
Himalayan Conservation and Development Association	Humla	PFM	33,682 /6 m
Human Welfare and Environment Protection Centre	Dang	MGG	10,726 /5 m
Integrated Community Development Campaign, Nepal	Dhading	PFM	9,042 /6 m
Jalsrot Vikas Sanstha	Kathmandu	PSD	48,351 /10 m
Janahit Good Governance Club	Dhankuta	PFM	10,999 / 6 m
Janaki Womens Awareness Society	Dhanusha	PFM	32,977 /6 m
Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre	Jumla	PSD	48,260 /10 m
Mahuli Community Development Centre	Saptari	PFM	10,999 / 6 m
ProCivic Society	Kathmandu	PSD	13,920 /11 m
Radio Chinnamasta	Saptari	MGG	10,760 /6 m
Rastriya Rojgar Prawardhan Kendra	Sarlahi	MGG	10,697 /6 m
Reconstruction and Research Development Centre	Mugu	PSD	10,985 /6 m
Rural Regional and Agro Forestry Development Centre	Bara	PFM	32,440 /6 m
Sahara Nepal	Bahjang	PFM	10,755 /5 m
Vijaya Development Resource Centre	Nawalparasi	PSD	44,760/ 10 m

Table 2: Tools used in order of frequency of their use.[7]

Public Expenditure Tracking Systems
Participatory Budgeting
Citizens Charter
Public hearings
Community Score Cards
Citizens Report Card
Participatory Planning
Participatory Budget Analysis
Public Grievance Redressal Mechanisms
Social Audits
Public Help Desk
Public service Tracking
Citizens Watch group
Complaint Hearing Mechanism
Zero Corruption Tolerance

What does this illustrate?

This illustrates that CSOs, trained by PRAN through its partners, are quite capable of learning the use of social accountability tools, of negotiating with local government for the practice of these tools in the local government units, of educating and orienting citizens about their rights and entitlements, using these tools, and of making the whole exercise positive and constructive, increasing the practice of good governance at local government level in Nepal.

It is instructive to recognize what is not illustrated:

a. Local Government never forbad the CSOs from practicing social accountability (although there were instances where the Local government officials were less than enthusiastic)
b. The CSOs were able to work with the citizens at their own pace and in their own language. There were no instances where the citizens rejected the approach of the CSOs
c. There were no instances of confrontation (although sometimes the CSOs had to be skillful negotiators to avoid this)

What does this lead to?

In most cases the project led to a commitment from the local government officials to reform their ways of working so that they kept to the law and the regulations in respect of rights and entitlements: and a commitment from the citizens to regularly monitor the local

[7] A list of Social Accountability tools and how to use them is available in PRAN's publication "Sourcebook of Social Accountability Tools in Nepal" 2011. Other lists are in the World Bank's Sourcebook of Social Accountability, and the UNDP's Handbook on Social Accountability.

government officials in the future to make sure that there was (a) no back sliding, and (b) that they would take up their opportunities for participatory planning.

In turn this will lead to citizens becoming involved in democracy and the conduct of good governance. The original hopes of those who funded PRAN (the State and Peace Building Fund) were that PRAN would lead to better State Building and better Peace Building. This is a high level desired outcome which would need a separate study, but what has been achieved by PRAN will contribute to a reduction in poverty, and a growth in participation – both of which are likely to contribute to state and peace building.

What did not happen?

Even though many of the activities of the sub-grantees involved identifying and controlling corruption, and corruption based upon individuals and political parties taking for themselves resources that rightfully belonged to poor and marginalised people, it seems that few citizens and citizen groups were interested in sanctions, punishment or prosecution of the wrong doers. Apart from Sahara Nepal in Bhajang, (Page 62) there is no evidence of citizens demanding restitution for money stolen from them, or a desire to take the cases to the courts. Citizens, instead, were enthusiastic to inform the local government officials that:

a. They now knew what their rights and entitlements were
b. They now knew that they had been robbed of their rights and entitlements
c. They did not intend to let this happen again
d. They were putting the local government officials on notice that they would be watching for future infringements

How does this illustrate PRAN's purpose?

PRANs purpose, as noted before, is to create:

A civil society sector with a considerable array of SA skills and a good knowledge of SA tools that would enable CSOs to engage actively and effectively in holding public agencies accountable. The impact would be improved public service delivery, reduced corruption, and greater transparency and responsiveness among government agencies to citizens and hence improved development outcomes.

The work done by 19 sub-grantees illustrates that this is possible: PRAN's work has been limited and of a pilot nature, but there is good reason to believe, that if it was taken to scale, it would be able to have the outcomes desired.

The question of taking to scale is, however, complicated: a wholesale improvement in local governance would mean a substantial reduction in the amount of funds presently appropriated by individuals and by political parties. This has become the norm, and has been practiced with impunity. Nepal has the example of LGAF, within the national multi donor supported LGCDP program, which illustrates that when a CSO supported program reveals and prevents too many illegal activities by government officials, the government closes it down, even though it is a government program.

Lessons learnt

The following points come up regularly in the sub-grantees reports

- They needed more time to make a serious change in the status quo
- Many people, particularly the very poor, wanted allowances to take part in voluntary activities, particularly discussions which took them away from their daily income.
- Success came from reforms carefully negotiated with local government officials
- It took more time than had been envisioned to teach local people that social accountability was a useful method of work to improve their lives. Once taught, however, people were very enthusiastic and committed to continue the work, even in the absence of an overall project.

PRAN
Program for
Accountability in Nepal

Social Accountability in Action

Abhiyan Nepal initiates Citizens Councils finding common cause with Itihari Municipality to make sure that services are delivered to citizens

The Context and the Problems

No other working substitute has replaced the lack of local level citizens representatives to the VDCs, Municipalities and DDCs in Nepal (which has been the situation since 2002). Municipalities have no go-between to introduce them to the citizens, and in their absence there is scope for misapprehension, maladministration, malfeasance and confusion. Local CSOs, however, can facilitate links between citizens and local authorities to ensure social accountability, and to monitor that it continues.

Municipal officials are apprehensive of facing unplanned citizens forums where they think they will be subject to accusation and blame. If, however, there is a structure whereby dialogue can be ensured, officials are ready to discuss issues of service provision.
Citizens are also apprehensive about meeting municipal officials because they do not know enough about their rights and entitlements, and do not know how the municipal offices work.

What actually happened?

Abhiyan Nepal considered that re-invigorating two existing structures of social accountability and introducing a third was a sensible strategy.

They started by emphasizing the need for Citizens Charters to be made operational in the 4 municipalities of Dhankuta, Itihari, Mechinagar, and Ilam. In the past Citizens Charters (which inform citizens of the nature, costs, time and locations of government services) and which are displayed as signboards outside government offices, were largely ignored in these 4 municipalities. They were not up to date, often illegible, and largely unhelpful. Citizens, therefore, were not helped to find their way in the complexity of government services. They encouraged citizens and municipalities to make sure the Citizens Charters were up to date and helpful and held 36 Citizen Charter orientations. In some cases Municipalities produced Citizens Charters as booklets (see illustration)

This led to a re-invigoration of public hearings which had also become inactive (although mandatory), or had evolved into a ritual for local government officials with very little interaction with the citizens. The citizens, stimulated by the Citizens Charters to understand more about the services available to them, wanted to have the opportunity to discuss issues with the Municipal council, and helped by facilitators found by the CSO, set up 16 public hearings. These gave an opportunity for interaction between citizens and government officials.

Thirdly the CSO introduced the mechanism of community score cards between service providers and service receivers whereby each side had the opportunity separately to clarify their problems, and then come together to find common ground and common action plans to overcome jointly agreed problems. They held 20 community score card testings.

In order to facilitate all these initiatives Abhiyan Nepal introduced 4 Citizens Councils (one in each municipality) as a form of civil forum supplementing the LGCDP's Ward Citizen Forum, and got these approved by the DDC; they also helped to create joint monitoring committees in each municipality to make sure the process continued well.

All of the above were covered by local radio which played a very important role, not just in informing people about the project, but in stimulating public interest and commitment to the measures.

What does this illustrate?

It seems in this case that the municipal officials were open to increased dialogue between them and citizens , but did not feel persuaded of the need for them, or did not feel they had the expertise to carry them out. Once a go-between, in the form of the CSO, Abhiyan Nepal, backed by enthusiasm from the citizens that Abhiyan Nepal had helped to generate, offered themselves as the means for establishing and fostering the link between officials and citizens, it seems that government offices were enthusiastic and sent representatives to participate in Citizens Charter orientation, Community Score Card testing, and Public Hearings.

This increased dialogue led to a number of small successes whereby citizens asked for improved garbage collection, the setting up of a help desk (see illustration), easier access for disabled people, and correction of officials access to petrol and motorcycles.

What does this lead to?

Citizens aware of the services available to them, and how to access them (through Citizens Charters); citizens able to question government officials in public hearings; familiarity between citizens and officials of the mechanism of Community Score Cards as a way of jointly planning action, and the agreement to joint Citizens Councils as a way to keep the new process of dialogue in operation, and involvement of both citizens and officials in Joint Monitoring Committees

What did not happen?

Even though there must have been maladministration and malfeasance from the side of the local government officials, the process was a positive and forward looking one of seeking collaboration and dialogue, rather than sanctions for poor governance practices.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study shows that PRAN can work with a locally based INGO (CECI) to identify high quality local CSOs to receive grants (Abhiyan Nepal received a grant of $43,372 over 10 months); and this CSO can, in turn, helped by mentoring, implement social accountability practices, particularly Public Hearings, Citizen Charters, and Community Score Cards, to improve Municipal Good Governance. There were 6074 direct beneficiaries and over 5000 indirect beneficiaries which have heard of the work through radio. This case study also illustrates constructive engagement between citizens and officials.

Productions from Abhiyan Nepal

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Mechinagar Municipality replaces the old Citizens Charter
   - 2.2. Dhankuta Municipality cuts back the fuel allowance
   - 2.3. Dhankuta Municipality establishes a Help Desk

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public Hearing
   - 3.2. Community Score Card testing
   - 3.3. Citizen Carter Orientations

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Report of Context Mapping
   - 4.2. Exit Poll Report
   - 4.3. Brief Report on Tools practiced
   - 4.4. Radio programmes (24 Episodes)
   - 4.5. Television programmes (4 episodes
   - 4.6. Learning Report

Social Accountability in Action

Community Communications Centre helps Ward level women's associations in Leknath Municipality to be galvanized around municipal finances and expenditure tracking

The Context and the Problems

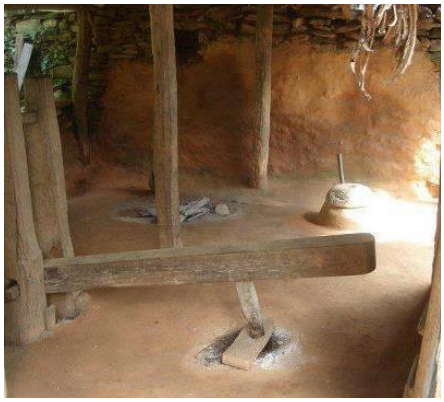
In Nepal's 58 municipalities, the lowest level of people's organizations occur at the Ward level. A ward in Leknath, a municipality in the Western Region, typically comprises 4,000 people. There are 15 wards in this municipality of 42,000 people.

At the ward level there are many women's organizations: typically they work on social welfare or service functions – for example, mothers clubs or drinking water projects. In general women are discriminated against in Nepal and their organizations rarely get access to decision making forums.

All 58 Municipalities in Nepal receive an annual block grant from the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MFALD) for its activities. 10% of the block grant is reserved for women's activities. The problem was that the women had no knowledge of this entitlement, and once they found out, they found the money had been spent on something on which they had not been consulted.

What actually happened?

In the 2012 Municipal budget, out of the 10% of the block grant reserved for women, an amount of NPR 150,000 (@ 10,000/Ward) was allocated by the Municipality to pay for "Dhikki" (a simple device for pounding rice – see picture) in each of the 15 wards. There was no consultation with the women in the municipality.



Community Communication Centre (CCC), a local Leknath CSO, had been trained in social accountability through PRAN – particularly public expenditure tracking – and had also received a grant to operationalise this training. CCC obtained a copy of the Leknath municipal budget, analyzed it, and found that towards the end of the fiscal year some corrupt contractors from 10 wards had approached the Municipality with fake completion bills and had been paid the budget allocated for Dhikki without actually installing any. The CCC informed the women associations about this. This was completely new information for the women's associations who previously had no idea that a part of the Leknath municipal budget was for them, or what it was going to be spent on.

Subsequently, and with guidance from CCC, the women complained to the Municipal Authority that they had never previously been informed about funds for women. They formed themselves into the Ward Level Women's Mechanism for Public Expenditure Tracking to make sure that this did not happen again. Moreover, they found that Dhikkis had not been built in 3 wards despite the payment already made against fake bills. They then forced the corrupt contractors who had received payment but not built the Dhikki, to build them.

What does this illustrate?

a. The Municipality, in spite of regulations to the contrary, did not inform its constituency about their entitlements

b. The Municipal Authority has not dealt properly with funds intended for women.
c. A CSO, once trained in social accountability and funded to apply such learning, can help citizens at grass roots level understand their entitlements, understand how government does and does not work, and become energized to do something about corruption.

What does this lead to?

The women's associations were conscientized by their experience. They said, vehemently, "We will always get involved in ward level meetings in the future, and make sure that we are involved in decisions about funds meant for women". They would also provide their own ideas about how these funds should be spent.

What did not happen?

Nobody at the Ward Committee or Municipality was accused or punished for not complying with the rules and regulations. The women did not feel able to take such a step, this time. It is possible, therefore, that the Municipality employees feel that they can continue to act with impunity into the future.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

- PRAN trained a local CSO, CCC, in social accountability, particularly in Public Financial Management, and more specifically, in Public Expenditure Tracking; funded it to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational material.

- The local level CSO, CCC, obtained details of the Municipal annual budget, analyzed it, and informed the women's associations at Ward level where it affected them.

- The women's associations were:
  a. Informed of their entitlements
  b. Informed how government worked and did not work
  c. Agreed to put their own ideas forward in the future, and monitor the municipality's behavior.

PRAN's purpose of promoting social accountability through trained and funded CSOs has resulted in women at ward level in Leknath Municipality being made aware of their entitlement, refusing to condone corruption, and agreeing actively to monitor municipal governance in the future.

Productions from Community Communications Centre

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Mechinagar Municipality replaces the old Citizens Charter
   - 2.2. Dhankuta Municipality cuts back the fuel allowance
   - 2.3. Dhankuta Municipality establishes a Help Desk

3. Tool Briefs
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Social Accountability in Action

Deep Jyoti Youth Club helps citizens in Maglung Municipality to understand their rights and entitlements and persuades the Municipality to change the ways it works

The Context and the Problems

The Municipalities of Nepal receive block grants from the central government part of which are specifically earmarked under the Good Governance Law of ……. . These are 10% for women, 10% for children, and 15% for Dalits, Janjatis, senior citizens widows and other marginalized groups. Many of these people do not, however, know these regulations, together with the other regulations that allow them to be part of a participatory process to decide on the spending of these funds. The Municipality is mandated to inform and educate the citizens about its budgets and processes, but Baglung, like many others, does not do so. And if citizens do not ask for their entitlements, Baglung, again like many other Municipalities, does not offer them. Women in particular in Baglung were totally unaware of the budget intended for women.

In general the issue of budgets is something that citizens do not concern themselves with, leaving it to government officials to manage, and by doing so, not realizing what they are missing.

What actually happened?

Deep Jyoti Youth Club (DJYC) decided that Public Financial Management Reform was the theme that they were interested in, and saw the value of Public Expenditure Tracking (PETS) as the mechanism they wanted to employ. PETS is a careful and intentional "watch" over the use of public resources. It involves close monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the local bodies budget process. DJYC held 1 public hearing on the topic, 3 public dialogues with the Municipality (see picture), and spent considerable time holding orientation and training courses with ward level citizens to understand PETS, forming PETS Committees in each ward.

It also encouraged 24 radio broadcasts over the length of the project some of which were used by the Municipality to inform citizens about its planning, budgeting and implementation processes. The Municipality made public commitments to enhance the people's participation in next years budgeting process.

The DJYC made sure that 12 hording boards were set up with Citizens Charters, while PETS committees made representations to the Municipality about their particular concerns, one of which was for the Ring Road Nagar Bus Service the absence of which was causing citizens a lot of expenditure on taxis.

The women of Ward 11 made a particular representation for their share of the block grant. They were asked to submit a plan, did so, and were awarded NRps 50,000 by the Municipality.

What does this illustrate?

It illustrates that public pressure, allied to an informed population, can make a considerable difference in the struggle of people for their rights and the accountability of government. The picture illustrates a public dialogue with the Municipality It also illustrates that a Municipality is willing to change if the right arguments and the right pressure is applied. One of the important pressures is public opinion mobilized through the radio. The Municipality recognized this and put out their own reformed position through the radio as well. It also illustrates the need for service receivers to cultivate good relations with service providers, and to overcome initial reluctance for reform.

What does this lead to?

The understanding and use of PETS leads to an informed and empowered collection of citizens who are unlikely to return to a status quo ante in which they were ignorant of how the budget works and how it affected (or did not affect) them. 35% of the direct beneficiaries are Dalit and they are unlikely to forget what they have learnt.

DJYC has made sure that the PETS Committees have been developed as Community based organizations registered in the municipality as institutuio0ns which will continue the work, and DJYC itself has committed to carry the message of PETS to other VDCs in the Baglung vicinity where it works. They will use the same technique - developing close collaboration with the VDC secretaries, orienting them to PETS, and mobilizing the media.

What did not happen?

It is difficult to know whether the Municipality has full changed its way of working. They have seemed to be very accommodating to the demands made on them, particularly committing to increasing participatory budgeting next year, and proving to be responsive to the requests of the women of Ward 11, for instance.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN trained a local CSO, Deep Jyoti Youth Club, in social accountability, particularly in Public Financial Management, and more specifically, in Public Expenditure Tracking; funded it to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational material. The project cost $33,512 and took 6 months. The local level CSO, DJYC, tracked the Municipal annual budget, analyzed it, and informed the citizens of its contents. They put this information on the radio and through this developed an informed citizenry who were able to put pressure on the Municipality through public dialogues, and public hearings. In a number of cases citizens made specific requests for reform to the Municipality and in one case, the women of Ward 11 were able to obtain their due entitlements.

Productions from Deep Jyoti Youth Club

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Baglung Municipality improves the Road and Nagar Bus Service
   - 2.2. Women of Ward 11 of Baglung Municipality start to get their entitlements

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public Expenditure Tracking Survey

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Public Expenditure Survey Report
   - 4.2. IEC Material
   - 4.3. Citizens Charter
   - 4.4. Radio report (CD)
   - 4.5. Hoarding Board
   - 4.6. PETS Tools
   - 4.7. Public Hearing Report (CD)

PRAN
Program for
Accountability in Nepal

Social Accountability in Action

Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) tracks public service provision towards Dalits and marginalised people in Dhanusha, Kavre, Bajura, and Bahjang, and gets commitment to increase it.

The Context and the Problems

Within the caste system of Nepal, Dalits are the lowest caste, often excluded from information, last to receive any benefits of development programs, and living in most remote and least served areas. Dalit women suffer double discrimination as women and as Dalit. There are, however, clear national policies and practices to give special preference to Dalits, particularly in the block grants to the DDCs and VDCs – which, like many similar policies in Nepal, are not well implemented.
FEDO is a national organization working to improve the situation of women Dalit with Chapters in 53 districts, including the 4 districts of this program. FEDO's base line survey in the 4 districts discovered the following knowledge and use of 12 government offices by Dalits.

Government office	% of Dalit which know of it	% of Dalit which use its services
Community development Office	74.2	25.8
District Education Office	68.3	36.7
District Agriculture Office	66.3	27.3
District Cottage and Small Industry office	56.8	14.0
Forestry office	63.9	15.3
Animal health Office	67.0	40.7
Women Development office	63.5	16.0
Public Health Office	55.1	25.0
Water and Sanitation office	62.3	28.0
Dalit Upliftment and Coordination Office	53.2	12.7
DDC	53.2	31.3
VDC	85.9	31.3

That clearly shows that services of the government have either not reached to them, or, if reached, are very insufficient. In particular the Dalit Upliftment Office is shown to be marginally effective.

What actually happened?

FEDO's Base line provided the context for their program (see above). 193 Dalit women in 4 districts were trained and oriented to social accountability in theory and in practice to demand the services that they were due from Government – through 8 pressure groups. At the same time the government officials were oriented and trained about the services that their agencies ought to be offering, and this was backed up by radio programs, and public hearing. This resulted in commitment to do more for Dalit, and in particular a request for them to come in groups rather than individually. FEDO, specifically, used the mechanism of publicly honoring the bureaucrats who had performed best on Dalit programs, and found this very effective (see picture above).

It was difficult to work in Dhanusha DDC and Janakpur municipality amongst those Districts targeted for the work because Central Government had shut both offices down for corruption.
FEDO produced a booklet mapping the resources of different government agencies and distributed this to both service providers and service receivers, both of whom were ignorant of the information.
In some particular places the public hearings brought out specific issues that the Dalit women pursued – demonstrating for the appointment of a woman Dalit teacher in Padadewal (Bahjang) – see picture, and funding in Nala Tukucha (Kavre).
FEDO also tried to involve other CSOs which did not have a pro-dalit focus in their programs – but without much success.

FEDO reached out to political parties through the members of the (now officially defunct, but actually continuing) All Party Mechanism, and received their commitment to allocate more resources to Dalit women. All Dalit members of the four districts said that this program offered them information for the first time about the plans, programs and budgets that were meant for Dalit.

What does this illustrate?

Government agencies are ignorant of their legal requirements for positive action towards Dalits. One appraised of these they are willing to carry out their duties, but value the work of FEDO in introducing them to the Dalit in their area and helping Dalit make plans. In spite of clear and well-known government commitments of 35% of block grants to Dalits and other marginalized groups, these frequently are not acted on by government agencies, nor, unfortunately requested by Dalit themselves.

What does this lead to?

This leads to considerable interest in government agencies to provide the resources for Dalit which are required by law, once they are made aware of them, and helped with their implementation

What did not happen?

Both Media and other CSOs proved not to be as helpful as had been expected by FEDO. It proved difficult to get as much time as hoped for from Dalit who could not afford to take time off from work for training, discussions etc. and requested allowances to allow them to do so.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN trained a national CSO, Feminist Dalit organisation, in social accountability, particularly in tracking the delivery of public services to Dalit; funded it to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational material. The project cost $48,487 and took 10 months. FEDO worked with 191 women and 2 men in 4 districts to identify the resources due to Dalit, educated both service providers and service receivers to this information, ascertained whether they were being paid, and persuaded the government officials how to do more, using public hearings and other dialogue sessions (particularly publicly honoring government officials who had done the most to help Dalits – resulting in strong commitments from them for greater resource transfers.

Productions from Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO)

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Tukucha Nala - the situation of Dalits
   - 2.2. Dalit teacher at Patadewal

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public Service Tracking

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Baseline Survey Report
   - 4.2. Resource Mapping of Dhanusa
   - 4.3. Radio programmes (98 Episodes - CD)

Social Accountability in Action

Himalayan Conservation and Development Association (HCDA) improve Public Service Delivery in Humla and Dolpa

The Context and the Problems

The Village Development Committees are the lowest level of the administration of central government, and the VDC secretaries are its lowest level representatives. Unfortunately the VDC secretaries are not often found in their villages, since many of them have moved to the District capitals. The reason for this originally was security during the fighting of 1996-2006, but many of them have not returned even though the fighting is over. Many administrative issues for poor people are blocked by this situation. In Humla 20 out of 27 VDCs have no Secretaries in place.
The absence of the VDC secretaries also hinders the important work of the VDCs in encouraging participatory planning for the development plans of the VDC, and participatory oversight of the use of the budget. Local planning becomes handled through local elites and political parties to their advantage and women and marginalized people are not involved and their voice is not heard. Low caste and marginalized people are also hesitant to get involved since it all managed by elites.

What actually happened?

HCDA were determined to bring women and marginalized people into the process of planning and monitoring of VDC affairs. They did this by, firstly, holding meetings between the citizens and the VDC authorities to explain the importance of these issues. This was followed by training and orientation to citizens on local development planning, implementation and oversight processes together with VDC secretaries and staff. HCDA then managed 20 training sessions specifically for local marginalized people and VDC staff which not only imparted knowledge but also developed face to face links. HCDC printed and disseminated 5 editions of newsletters which backed up these discussions, and made sure that everything they were doing was broadcast in 30 programs on community radio (which had the result of bring the VDC secretaries back to the VDCs in Humla.

Apart from this HCDA made sure that there up to date Citizens Charters and that citizens and service delivery agencies were aware of them. In order to create institutions to keep the work going HCDA formed and promoted 20 Citizens Watch Groups (CWGs) in 20 VDCs of the two districts, and formed them into district level networks to monitor corruption and public service accountability (Citizens Watch group in Darma, Humla illustrated). 20 different trainings for these CWGs were undertaken and 2 public hearings were held.

What does this illustrate?

With some stimulus from an outside body which is prepared to initiate dialogue between people whose rights and entitlements have been ignored and the government agencies, it is quite possible to bring together people who have not been in contact, and develop a constructive engagement for better governance. The government bodies are made more aware of their constituency and their problems and re-educated about the rules and regulations for proper governance; the people are

educated about how things should be according to the law and energized and empowered to hold the government bodies accountable. This is done without violence, but by reminding everyone concerned about the laws and regulations and by showing the citizens that they can have an influence. It also illustrates the very real influence that community radio can have in a community. Citizens listening to information about the VDC are educated about what can and should be, and in turn put pressure on the VDC secretaries

What does this lead to?

This has led to the VDC committing itself to reform and improvement and, in particular, to involving people in the participatory practices concerning planning, budgeting sand oversight that are allowed by law. It has also led to citizens forming themselves into Citizens Watch Groups to make sure that the VDC does not backslide on its commitments and to keep up the pressure for reform. The reality of these commitments will be seen in the next budget cycle, but an impressive start has been made to change the previous situation. HCDA also involved the LGCDP district facilitator , ward level facilitator and different user group members. HCDA's work was also reported on BBC Nepali service which resulted in thanks from the CDO and Acting LDO.

Jubree Sunar (48) of Ward 1 Humla said "I will assess the local bodies program and expenditure on behalf of all women and will surely report any malpractices" found in the office"

What did not happen?

HCDA was unable to get all the VDC secretaries to participate in their own VDCs. They were also unable to get the participation of the women and marginalized people to the extent that they wanted.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN trained a local CSO, HCDA, in social accountability, particularly in Participatory Budgetting, Citizens Charters, Public Hearings and the use of Citizen Watch Groups; funded it to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational material. The project cost $33.682 and took 6 months. The local level CSO, tracked the Municipal annual budget, analyzed it, and informed the citizens of its contents. They put this information on the radio and through this developed an informed citizenry who were able to put pressure on the VDCs of Humla and Dolpa, and in particular pressure on the VDC secretaries who were often out of office. Although citizens were apprehensive about challenging the behavior of the VDC, once they were educated about the situation, they were confident to go on the radio and explain their actions, which had a big influence.

Productions from Himalayan Conservation Development Association

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Small Steps, big strides
   - 2.2. Increasing womens participation in development planning

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Participatory Budgets
   - 3.2. Citizens Charter
   - 3.3. Citizen Watch Group
   - 3.4. Public Hearing

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Karnali Pradesh newsletter (5 episodes)
   - 4.2. FM radio programs (30 episodes)
   - 4.3. 21 Citizens Charters

Social Accountability in Action

The Human Welfare and Environment Protection centre (HWEPC) uses an improved Citizens Charter to upgrade the governance of Ghorahi Municipality

The Context and the Problems

The services offered to its constituency by a Municipality are complicated and unclear to many people coming in from the country. They do not know what services are available, and, if they do, they do not know how to access them. Moreover they do not know about the municipal grants and expenditures according to the Municipality Grant Procedure 2068. This problem is meant to be resolved by the display of a Citizens Charter which gives all such information clearly to the citizens. The Municipality, however, had not done its part in providing information as could be seen from the old, decrepit Citizens Charter, put up 12 years ago, and never reviewed since. The information on it (names, charges, services, contact details) were out of date, and the Municipal officials showed no interest in improving the situation. The citizens in the Municipality wanted better services and this was the basis for HWEPC's initiative.

What actually happened?

The first task was to convince the municipal officials that the Citizens Charter needed to be improved. To put pressure on the Municipal officials, interaction and discussion events were held inviting representatives of different sectors, journalists and municipal staff. After many meetings the Municipality agreed to review it. A 21 person Ghorahi Municipal Citizens Concern Group was formed to help the Municipality rework the charter and reinstate a new one (see photo), and this group also produced the charter in the form of a booklet, and distributed it widely.

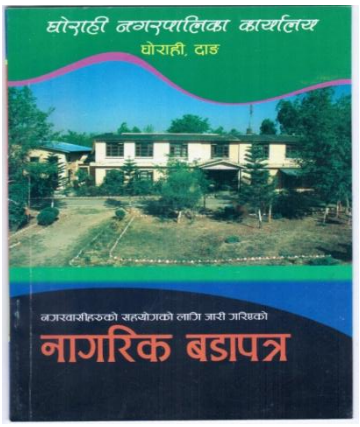
The issue of the Citizens Charter galvanized the people into several suggestions for the improvement of the Municipality's services to the people, and these were pursued:

(a) establishing a public grievance management system with a Grievance Hearing officer,
(b) broadcasting information about services through FM radio,
(c) establishing of a Citizens help Desk,
(d) improvement of the Municipality's web-site, which now contains the Citizens Charter and can receive complaints
(e) establishing a toll free phone,
(f) introduction of a token system so that "first come, first served".

Citizens also pursued one issue of high importance to them, namely solid waste management, where only 20% of the people received any services at all. A preliminary review and study was conducted with the Municipality.

All of these ideas were carried out via a series of training sessions for citizens and municipal officials on procedures, planning and budget allocation, particularly with the aim of making sure that women, dalit, and janjatis were made aware of them. They were also regularly broadcast on FM radio. A

particular help in all of this was advice from some ex-councillors from the days when they were still elected.



What does this illustrate?

HWEPC said that initially municipal officials had little interest in renewing the Citizens Charter, and in general were impolite towards citizens seeking information, and ignorant about their own procedures. HWEPC's attempts to mobilize citizens around the issue of a new Citizens Charter produced more than just an improved charter – it also enabled citizens to learn more about their rights and entitlements in planning the municipal budget, and improved the services they received from the Municipality. The creation of the Ghorahi Municipality Citizens Concern Group means that these initiatives will be strengthened and continued over time. The use of FM radio and a booklet (see photo) as a way of disseminating information about the Municipality and the reform efforts of the HWEPC initiative also illustrates the ways of extending a localized effort to a much larger population.

What does this lead to?

This leads to educated and knowledgeable citizens who have services now that they did not have before and greater acquaintance about their rights in respect of budget planning and implementation. It also leads to a more knowledgeable Municipality staff who were previously not well acquainted with their own regulations, and more aware staff who previously were inactive or lackadaisical in providing services to the people in their area. It has also led to a positive and useful working relationship between a CSO (HWEPC), the citizens of Ghorahi, and Municpal staff.

What did not happen?

There seems to have been little friction between HWEPC, the citizens and the Municipality staff. Once the Municipal staff appreciated the depth of feelings of the people, and how a better Municipality would be to their advantage, they collaborated with the initiative. For example, one customer, Mr Pradip Adikhari, who received prompt and efficient service from the Help Desk on a question of payment of land tax, told HWEPC "I am very impressed with the services and the management of Ghorahi Municipality".

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN trained a local CSO, HWEPC, in social accountability, particularly in the use of the Citizens Charter. It funded the CSO to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $10,726 and took 6 months, had 979 direct beneficiaries and 20,000 indirect beneficiaries. The local level CSO negotiated with the Municipality over the importance of an up to date and correctly informed Citizens Charter, greater professionalism in the providing of services to citizens, and greater participation of citizens (including women, dalit and Janjatiis) in the Municipal Budget. They put this information on the radio and through it developed an informed citizenry who were able to put pressure on Ghorahi Municipality to perform better. HWEPC made sure that the work would continue by printing booklets of the Citizens charter and disrtributing them, broadcasting its contents through FM radio, and setting up a 21 member Ghorahi Municipality Citizens Concern Group which would make sure that the initiative continues.

Productions from Human Welfare and Environment Protection Centre (HWEPC)

1. Project Completion report

2. <u>Case Studies:</u>
   - 2.1. Improving the Citizens Charter after 10 years
   - 2.2. (Nepali)

3. <u>Tool Briefs</u>
   - 3.1. Citizen Carter

4. <u>Other Reports/materials produced</u>
   - 4.1. Citizens Charters of Ghorahi Municipality
   - 4.2. Report of solid waste management services in Ghorahi Municipality
   - 4.3. Booklets with extracts from Self Governance Act 2068, Regulation and Municipality Grant Mobilization Procedures

PRAN
Program for
Accountability in Nepal

Social Accountability in Action

Integrated Community Development Campaign (ICDC) initiates a change in attitude in two VDCs of Dhading District from upwards accountability to the DDC to downwards accountability to the people

The Context and the Problems

VDCs are the first point of contact with the government for most citizens in Nepal. According to the law VDCs are meant to hold public council meetings once a year in which the workings of the VDC are made known. There is also a yearly assessment tool (MCPM) which determines whether a VDC gets supplementary funding. The VDC is meant to have the regular presence of a VDC secretary to carry out the administrative tasks, and is meant to allow citizens on request to see all VDC documents, including financial ones. In Muralibhanjyang and Sanaulabazar VDCs, none of this was happening: VDC council meetings only took place when the political parties agreed to it (and were often postponed); VDCs did not inform the people in their area (especially women, dalits and janjatis) about VDC income and expenditures; and secretaries were often absent with no business transacted in their absence. Moreover Muralibhanjyang had failed to meet the MCPM standards.
The VDC secretary of Sanaulabazar believed that he should not show outsiders VDC documents, was unaware of the provisions of the Right to Information Act, and the VDC had no Citizens Charter.

What actually happened?

ICDC started with a village orientation program to notify community people and political parties about the program and their rights to get information from government agencies. At the same time ICDC talked with the VDC secretary to clarify for him the citizens rights to information, inviting him to participate in community meetings. Following this, he agreed he agreed to release VDC council documents. ICDC followed this by Public Hearings in which the citizens raised their issues about political parties and VDC management – and this was all covered by community radio. After clarifications and corrections from both sides, the VDCs and Political Parties made written commitments (a) to ensure participation of community members in VDC councils, (b) to allocate the block grants to the target groups, and (c) to organize annual Public Hearings. The written VDC/political party commitments are kept publicly displayed in the VDC offices.

Citizens Charter placed in Sunaulabazaar after PETS survey

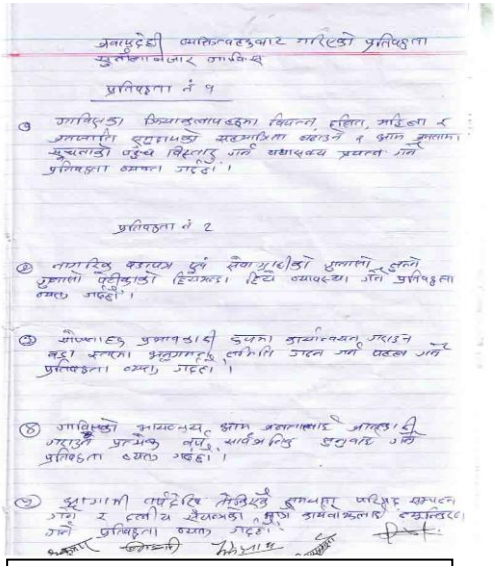
ICDC also carried out the following:

a. A Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) in 304 households which identified a clear picture of VDC expenditures, and increased peoples interest in VDC budget issues
b. Writing up of the PETS survey, printing and dissemination of it, broadcasting it on FM radio.
c. Citizens Charters set up at the entrance of the two VDCs
d. Special training on VDC income and expenditure provided to 36 members of Ward Citizens Forums who committed to follow up on VDC reforms to make sure they were continued
e. Ensuring regular opening of the VDC offices and opportunities to carry out business with technical assistants in the absence of the VDC secretary
f. Making sure that Dalits were installed in User Committees, as is agreed by law.

The biggest change, however, was a general change of attitude of the VDC secretary who was previously unaware of the rights of citizens. Once these were explained to him, and it was clear that the citizens were aware of their rights, he acquiesced with ICDC's objectives.

What does this illustrate?

A situation in which the management of the VDC was monopolized by the VDC secretary and political parties, in which the resources of the VDC were unknown to the general population and were manipulated by political parties, and in which the people's rights to be involved in the governance of the VDC were ignored, was turned round by the work of a CSO which was informed about the law and the regulations and could convince the people of these. A combination of educating local people as to their rights, bringing such issues to an open dialogue with the VDC, informing/reminding the VDC of the law, has caused a change of attitude in government officials, and with the help of the Ward Citizens Forums who have been oriented to the rights of the citizens, has a good chance of being continued.



Publicly displayed commitment by VDC and political parties to revise the workings of the VDC

What does this lead to?

This leads to informed and active citizens, who are prepared to make sure that they will use the opportunities open to them to contribute to the governance of the VDC, and who are prepared to play their part in the governance process of local government bodies. It also leads to changed mid set of the existing local government officials who now appreciate that they can be held accountable for non-performance of their duties

What did not happen?

There is still no regular flow of information from the VDC to the people. Information has to be sought on a piece by piece basis. There is still domination by the village elites in the Dalit and marginalized communities which may hinder their readiness to offer criticism of the VDC. Time will tell whether there is backsliding by the VDC and the political parties.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN trained a local CSO, ICDC, in social accountability, particularly in the use of the Public Expenditure Tracking System. It funded the CSO to apply what it had learnt; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $9,042 and took 6 months, had 947 direct beneficiaries. ICDC negotiated with two VDCs over the rights and entitlements of citizens in a VDC, the importance of a timely and correctly informed Citizens Charter, and greater participation of citizens (including women, dalit and Janjatiis) in planning the Municipal Budget. A written commitment from the VDC and Political Parties was obtained agreeing to changes in the way the VDC worked. This was broadcast on the radio which developed an informed citizenry able to put pressure on VDCs Muralibhanjyang and Sanaulabazar of Dhading district to perform better. ICDC made sure the work would continue by printing and distributing booklets of the PETS survey and broadcasting its contents through FM radio, and setting up 36 members of Ward Citizens Forum to ensure the initiative continued and there was no backsliding.

Productions from Integrated Community Development Campaign (ICDC)

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Making sure there is a Citizens Charter in the VDC office
   - 2.2. Written Commitments from the political parties and VDC

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public Financial Management reform

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. 300 copies of PETS surveys in booklet form
   - 4.2. Video CD of Public hearing in VDC

Social Accountability in Action

Jalsrot Vikas Sanstha (JVS) shows how Citizens Report Card can help those responsible for Water and Sanitation project management to learn from their users

The Context and the Problems

Water users and management committee members holding discussion about the need for annual general

Water Supply and Sanitation schemes in Nepal are managed by different agencies selected in consultation with central level organizations. The most common ones are the national Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC – examples used are Janakpur and Nepalgunj), Small Town Water and Sanitation User Committees (STWS - examples used are Leknath, Kaski and Ratnagar, Chitwan), and Community Water Supply and Sanitation User Committees (CMWS - examples used are Kuirepani, Dang, and Kahundanda, Kaski – many run by women). Very few schemes have any idea about seeking feedback from the schemes users about the quality of the services provided, and as a result there is often dissatisfaction from users about some aspect or other of the scheme but no awareness from the service providers of what is not working well. Jalsrot Vikas Santha decided to use the Citizens Report Card methodology to ascertain users' satisfaction, inform service providers about problems identified by users, and suggest to them how such problems could be solved.

What actually happened?

After having identified the 6 schemes that they wanted to use for the CRC study, JVS had to design a questionnaire to ascertain the information they wanted to collect and test it. This covered the following topics:

1. Installation time
2. Quality of installation
3. Simnplicity in installation
4. Time that water was supplied
5. Quantity of Water supplied
6. Quality of water supplie
7. Timeliness of repair of water supply
8. Quality of repairs if carried out
9. Fee for repair
10. Tariff of water supplied
10. Simplicity in payment of tariff
12. Behaviour of staff

They tried for 900 filled questionnaires and received 826. They processed the survey data reporting to each of the 6 organisations. Then they disseminated the CRC findings to each of the organisations, held interface meetings at 6 locations (and one at national level), and held 6 capacity building workshops for the organisarions to understand the implications of the information with which they had been presented. Examples of the information that they presented is:

	Level of satisfaction	Nepalgunj	Janakpur	Leknath	Ratnanagar	Kuirepani	Kahundana
Quantity of Water	Highly Unsatisfactory	2	1	0.7	-	-	6
	Unsatisfactory	24.5	61.4	11.1	12.7	33.3	80
	Neutral	34.3	8.9	4.9	2.1	16.7	4
	Satisfactory	39.2	27.7	82.6	84.5	50	10
	Highly Satisfactory	-	1	0.7	0.7	-	-

Quality of water	Highly Unsatisfactory	2	2	-	-	-	-
	Unsatisfactory	24.5	52.5	18.1	4.9	-	4
	Neutral	34.3	16.8	9.0	3.5.	16.7	46
	Satisfactory	39.2	28.7	69.4	91.6	83.3.	50
	Highly Satisfactory	-	-	2.8	-	-	-

What does this illustrate?

It illustrates what were the opinions of the users about the different elements of information relevant to the management of a water scheme, and this information is available to the managers for them to improve their services.

What does this lead to?

The should lead to the managers of the water services offering to improve their services in places where it is shown that the users are unhappy. The examples given, for instance, show, in terms of quantity of water a high level of dissatisfaction in NWSC schemes and a high level of satisfaction in STWS schemes, while it terms of water quality, a high level of dissatisfaction in NWSC schemes and a high level of satisfaction in both STWS and CMWS schemes. In particular there is no mechanism in NWSC schemes for management to interact with users. Service providers in all cases accepted the findings of the survey and committed to improve various aspects of service delivery.

What did not happen?

If a service provider is keen to respond to the findings of its customers, JVS would expect that these findings would give them direction as to how to do this, and how to continue with monitoring of users opinions. Only Janakpur so far has established a coordinator for a water supply monitoring system. One finding is that it is clear there is a higher level of satisfaction amongst the service users when they are involved in management as in STWS and CMWS.

Chairperson of the Committee narrating the difficulties faced in managing the water supply scheme

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN found a local CSO knowledgeable about CRC which wanted to apply this to the water and sanitation sector and demonstrate the value of the CRC methodology. It funded the CSO to apply its knowledge; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $48,351 and took 10 months, had 947 direct beneficiaries, and 170,987 indirect beneficiaries. JVS negotiated with 6 water providing organizations and provided them with feedback from their users. Apart from the feedback, many other organizations were impressed with the potential of the CRC methodology.

Productions from Jalsrot Vikas Sanstha

1. Project Completion report

2. <u>Case Studies:</u>
   - 2.1. Formation of Joint Coordination Committee for the Water Supply Corporation, J anakpur
   - 2.2. Holding interface meeting with between service users and Water Supply and Sanitation Committee, Dang

3. <u>Tool Briefs</u>
   - 3.1. Citizen Report Card

4. <u>Other Reports/materials produced</u>
   - 4.1. Workshop Reports (National and Local)
   - 4.2. Individual CRC reports (Nepali)
   - 4.3. Consolidated CRC report (English)
   - 4.4. CRC Booklet (Nepali)
   - 4.5. A/V CDs
   - 4.6. Photographs

Social Accountability in Action

Janahit Good Governance Club (JGGC) makes sure that all relevant people commit to participate in the reformed governance of the 3VDCs of Dhankuta

The Context and the Problems

As directed by the VDC Grant Working Procedure of 2067, the VDC office should organize its VDC council meeting once a year, and at this meeting allocate the budgets for all sectors - there should be representation from all the wards in the VDC, and the VDC secretary should inform all party representatives, ward citizens' forums and target group people one week in advance with an agenda for the meeting. Unfortunately over the past three years records showed that not all wards had been present in the Council meetings, and that the meetings had been dominated by Ward no 4 the home of the VDC and the political parties. Citizens were generally not only unaware of the council meetings, but were also unaware that this gave them the opportunity to participate in a planning meeting for the ward and the VDC, and were unaware of the ways that the budget was organized. This information was contested by the VDC secretaries who said that they had invited all necessary people. Many records of attendance at Council and Ward level meetings were, however, incomplete, and much of the financial record keeping was of poor quality.

Participants analyzing attendance of VDC Council Meeting minutes

What actually happened?

JGGC informed 84 stakeholders (VDCs, DDCs, and direct beneficiaries) of the plan to carry out a PETS, and got their agreement to the exercise. They requested the necessary documents from the DDC and VDC offices and these were provided. JGGC then informed 95 direct beneficiaries about PETS and participatory budget planning at the DDC and VDC level. It carried out the PETS survey with 100 stakeholders in Bhedetar VDC, 102 stakeholders at Mauna Budhuk VDC, and 105 stakeholders in Danda Bazaar, reviewing the documents and data over the past three years. It found that the quality of the VDC council minutes was very poor, and records of the ward level meetings were often absent. Financial information was kept manually at 2 of the VDCs and was computerised at one (Mauna Budhuk) and VDC secretaries helped us to successfully analyzse the budgets.

Once the budgets and the attendance records had been analyzed, supplemented by interviews with stakeholders, it was found that:

- The last installment of budget was released from the DDC to the VDC in the last week of the last month of the fiscal year
- The council meetings were dominated by only one ward without proportional representation of all wards
- Around 50% of people were ignorant of the idea of citizens' charter and the sevices available from the VDC
- What was reported in the documents received was different from the reality, and names were difficult to ascribe to actual people

JGGC presented the analyzed documents of attendance records to the VDC secretaries who, at first, refused to accept the findings, saying all ward level representatives were present in planning committee meetings. All participants in the PETS stressed to the VDC secretary how important it was that all should be represented, and that the records showed that this was not the case. Following discussions, all participants agreed to commit to more active participation in the VDC activities, meetings, and public hearings, and swore to do so in public holding a lighted lamp. All this information was broadcast on a weekly FM radio station. VDC officials also made a commitment to publish citizens' charters as leaflets or pamphlets and disseminate them through all wards.

What does this illustrate?

It illustrates that a CSO can learn the tool of Public Expenditure Tracking, and can teach this to a range of local people so that they can document and analyze local records, understand what these mean, and where these are different from what they are told by the VDC. It also illustrates that local people, helped by the CSO, can produce objective evidence which convinces the VDC and DDC staff, and persuades them to have a change of heart and commit to doing things in line with the procedures laid down by the government. It also illustrates that local people can learn how the budget, its planning, and its implementation is meant to work (particularly the 35% budget allocation for target group people), and see the difference from how it has been handled to date – which energizes them to make sure that they participate well in the future.

Live Interview about PFM_SA at Radio Makalu 92.2 Mhz

What does this lead to?

This should lead to representatives from all wards and all target group people attending VDC council meetings, and participating in the decisions made there. It also should lead to local people monitoring the decisions made at Council meetings so that they can check whether they have been implemented properly, and whether the VDC staff are doing what they publicly committed to do.

What did not happen?

Interestingly the VDC and DDC were quite accepting of the plan from JGGC to carry out a PETS exercise, and were willing to hand over documents (even thought they were not of good quality). Accessing VDC financial documents has often been a problem in other cases, but it was not here. When the data was collected through the PETS exercise, analyzed and the findings presented to the VDC, they were not happy to receive it, and had to be persuaded of the truth of the findings and the seriousness of the concern of the citizens for reform.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN responded to a proposal from a local CSO (Janahit Good Governance Club) which wanted to use the tool of Public Expenditure Tracking in 3 VDCs of Dhankuta District. It funded the CSO to apply its knowledge; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $10,999 and took 6 months, had 556 direct beneficiaries, and 139 indirect beneficiaries. JGGC negotiated with the 3 VDCs of 1 District, carried out a comprehensive PETS and tracked attendance at council meetings. Local citizens now have the opportunity to take part in council meetings at the ward and VDC level as is their right, and negotiate for their interests to be heard.

Productions from Janahit Good Governance Club

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. No Ward level representation during 3 years of VDC meetings
   - 2.2. Increase in citizens understanding of VDC services

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public Expenditure Tracking Survey

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. An Analysis of Public Financial Management in the VDC's budget (English and Nepali)
   - 4.2. Consolidated CRC report (English)
   - 4.3. Audio CD of Radio programs

Social Accountability in Action

Janakpur Womens Awareness Society (JWAS) carried out a survey of Public Expenditure in Dhanusha DDC and 5 VDCs, publicized widely the results, trained stakeholders in public expenditure tracking, and set up a system of "Citizens Juries" to advise the citizens.

The Context and the Problems

Local Governance in Nepal has lacked elected citizens representatives for the past 12 years. This has meant that government officials and representatives of political parties "represent" the citizens, which has provided great scope for the misuse of block grants from central government and social security payments. While there are well structured and sensible arrangements on paper for grass roots involvement in planning and budget implementation, these are frequently ignored – community people are kept out of the decision making process, are ignorant of the budget practices,and are not consulted on the priorities at the VDC level. As Ranjuman Mishra, member of Citizen Jury said, "*for 10 years I had no idea that there was a budget for women. All meetings took place behind closed doors in hotel rooms"*

JWAS found that the official Ward Citizens Forums (WCF) created by the Local Governance Community Development program (LGCDP) for the discussion of community needs, does not work well, principally because citizens do not understand local government processes. JWAS has supplemented WCFs with Citizens Juries formed of voluntary knowledgeable local people who can teach WCFs how to operate and how to use the structures available to them.

What actually happened?

JWAS, which had previous experience of working on accountability issues, identified interested citizens to survey the budget expenditure of Dhanusha DDC and five of its VDCs. They found a great deal of misappropriation: funds were withdrawn by VDC secretaries and held for some time before distributing them; people were not aware of their entitlements in education and agriculture and did not claim them, funds were corruptly manipulatedd by DDC and VDC personnel including technical and administrative staff, and by User Committees. JWAS also found that social security payments to women, the disabled and the elderly had been misappropriated. JWAS developed a report of the survey and a manual for Public Expenditure Tracking for the future (PETS), The results of the survey and the process of expenditure tracking were widely publicized in local languages and Nepali on community radio, newspapers, and TV.

Formation meeting of Citizen Juries,

JWAS also promoted the idea of Citizens Juries at VDC meetings: this was accepted and 5 VDC and 1 DDC level Juryies composed of 5-6 members were formed. These advisory groups helped citizens to learn how to recommend budget allocation, and disbursement to local government and how to monitor spending.

During the process of this project, but separately, the Ministry of Local Government carried out their own survey of the social security payments in Dhanusha: found huge corruption, and suspended 18 local government staff of Dhanusha DDC who are now being investigated by the CIAA.

What does this illustrate?

This illustrates that manipulation of government funding to local bodies by local government officials both as block grants and as direct social security payments to individuals is very widespread. It also illustrates that structures and systems set up to give the citizen a role in democratic local governance do not work because citizens cannot access the discussions about local development which are mandated in law, but ignored in practice.

Disseminating Survey Findings to the district level Stakeholders

It also illustrates that a competent CSO can turn this situation around by the determined application of social accountability tools (particularly PETS). A mature CSO, like JWAS, can overcome the local government officials' hiding of information and the absence of audited financial reports. Citizens who have long believed in local government malfeasance, have never previously had the tools or the training to be specific in their allegations.

What does this lead to?

This leads to (a) local government realizing that they cannot continue their corrupt practices because people are aware of them, and will not put up with them any longer (b) local people realizing that they have the power to research the way that government works and does not work, (c) local people realizing how they can use due and legal mechanisms to put their ideas forward, which they were not aware of before (d) appreciation by local people that government organized groups need advice and education before they can be effective. This will in turn lead to better project ideas for utilizing the block grants, better monitoring of projects , and more people entitled to social security receiving their due amounts.

What did not happen?

Surprisingly the CIAA, investigating corruption in Dhanusha DDC, never contacted JWAS to learn of their work.

All JWAS work has been forward looking – helping to educate local citizens to understand how government should work. When the corrupt realities of how government actually works is revealed, neither JWAS nor the concerned citizens groups seeks sanctions on those exposed – rather they seek to limit its occurrence in the future. The CIAA, in contrast seeks to punish wrongdoers.

How does this all illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study shows that PRAN can work with a locally based INGO (CECI) to identify high quality local CSOs to receive grants (JWAS received a grant of $32,977 over 6 months); and this CSO can, in turn, with mentoring,implement social accountability practices, particularly Public Expenditure Tracking and Citizens Juries, to improve Public Financial Management in local government. There is space for constructive engagement with the DDC and VDCs to carry out its data gathering, expenditure tracking, and public consultation work. 1715 citizens have directly benefitted from the work and many more who heard of the work from the media.

PRAN is a program of the World Bank in Nepal, promoting the use of social accountability tools to make sure that the citizens can hold the government accountable. It works through 3 Nepali partner organisations – ProPublic for Training, SAP Nepal for Knowledge dissemination and Networking, and TMS for monitoring and research ; and 1 INGO, CECI for Grant making.
Please contact www.worldbank.org/np/pran for more information.

Productions from Janaki Womens Awareness Society
1. Project Completion report
2. Case Studies: 2.1. Using PETS in Dhausha 2.2. Forming citizens juries
3. Tool Briefs 3.1. Public Expenditure Tracking 3.2. Citizens Juries
4. Other Reports/materials produced 4.1. Public Expenditure Tracking Survey in Dhanusha District

Social Accountability in Action

Karnali Integrated Rural Devpt. and Research Centre (KIDARC) used Complaints Hearing Mechanisms to educate citizens in 5 VDCs in Jumla about their rights and entitlements.

The Context and the Problems

In spite of recent attention from the Government of Nepal to the Karnali area, service receivers there are far from receiving such services. The mechanisms for delivery are not accountable, honest and transparent, and the intended services are often not received. Service providers often complain that service receivers are unaware of their entitlements but the reason is that no-one made them aware of their entitlements. They also say, when asked why they have not carried out their responsibilities, that they will respond once a complaint is received, without asking how someone will know how to complain. Many poor and marginalized people have not received their due entitlements, and do not know what to do about it. The effort of making a complaint often involves considerable effort to come into the District office from far afield, being met by unfriendly people who send the applicant from one place to another, or tell him/her to come back again in the future. There are, in fact, processes in law and regulations for collecting and dealing with complaints, dissatisfactions, and grievances, but these often are not applied. Complaints cannot, however, be made unless the would-be complainant knows what should have been done, and can compare this with what he/she knows has been done.

What actually happened?

KIRDARC worked a great deal with local CBOs and CSOs – in particular the District Human Rights Network (DHRN), and the Human Rights and Peace Group (HRPG). KIRDARC trained 45 members of these 2 organisations to start the process of educating people about social accountability. Subsequently educational materials were broadcast to about 160,000 people through Community FM radio. 19 Local volunteers (one each for a VDC) agreed to disseminate information based on the Citizens Charter, and collect complaints for the start of Complaints Hearing Committees (CHC) which were set up in the five districts where the project is implemented (Jumla, Humla Mugu, Dolpa, Kalikot). These CHCs regularly held meetings to respond to the complaints received from the people.

Women from Raya VDC complaining about Ante Natal services

500 copies of a Complaint Hearing Mechanism Tool were written, produced, and disseminated in English and Nepali (containing material on RTI and Hallo Sarkar). KIRDARC has persuaded the Education, Health, Forestry, Womens Development, and Agriculture departments, and to publicly broadcast their annual program and budget in all 5 districts. KIRDARC also managed 20 social audits and/public hearings and 41 meetings of complaint hearing committees in different service delivery agencies were held (in Jumla, Humla, 8 in Mugu, Dolpa, and 7 in Kalikot). 3 quarterly reports were printed and disseminated to update the situation of complaints and this produced moral pressure to make sure the citizens concerns were addressed.

One of the Public Hearings was on educational issues, and dealt with audits of expenditure on infrastructure, absentee teachers, unqualified teachers, pressure for favouritism from political parties and other local issues. The CDO attended this Public hearing and publicly committed to improve the quality of education.

There were meetings of the Complaint Hearing Support Committee which helped to revitalize a body authorised in law called the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) which some Government officials suggested showed there was no need for a complaints handling committee.
Once the Complaints Hearing Mechanism was operational led by the Complaints Hearing Committee, there was an immediate change in attitude, from service providers who responded to peoples needs, supported by the work of members of DHRN and HRPG who identified complaints which they brought to the Committee.

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee discussing complaints in DAO, Kalikot:

What does this illustrate?

Most poor and marginalized people had very little faith in the idea of bringing a complaint against a government official or department. Experience had taught them that they would not be received sympathetically, and that they would be met by a range of bureaucratic excuses. This project illustrates that committed CSOs and CBOs which are aware of the laws and regulations that govern local government can make a substantial difference. They can set up a Complaint Hearing Support Committee which will support a citizen's complaint and know how to present it to the relevant body. They can also involve a considerable amount of public pressure by educating people through community FM radio.

What does this lead to?

When citizens are encouraged by good results from making their complaints through the Complaints Hearing mechanism and supported by local CSOs/CBOs and local journalists, this starts a sustainable process. Attitudes pf both sides change. Ratna Bahadur Malla, a local resident, said "Due to the complaint hearing mechanism, today I received wages pending for a long time from work that I did during road construction of Dhaulagotha", whereas the VDC secretary of Shreenagar, Mugu said, in respect of an old Dalit called Bisi Tiruwa who finally got his old age allowance "I am happy to hear about the Complaint hearing Mechanism that facilitates issues related to elderly allowances"

What did not happen?

It seems that some government officials did not take the whole program as seriously as wanted since they did not come to meetings in which complaints were made. Many government officials were skeptical about CHM and felt that authority should stay with those who had power

How does this all illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study shows that PRAN can work with a locally based INGO (CECI) to identify high quality local CSOs to receive grants (KIRDARC received a grant of $48,260 over 10 months); and this CSO can, in turn, with close collaboration from local CBOs, bring about substantial changes in the way citizens can bring complaints against malpractices or maladministration by government. KIRARC and its collaborating partners, DHRN and HRPG have succeeded in getting complaints to be handled, and setting up a system for this to continue, and have done this against opposition from many government officials. KIRDARC claim that 7,408 people are direct beneficiaries, and, with the use of radio, 160,000 are indirect beneficiaries.

Productions from Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Making Complaint Hearing Mechanisms work
   - 2.2. Making health services regular

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Complaints Hearing Mechanism

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. 4 issues of Quarterly Newsletter
   - 4.2. Citizen Charter – compilation of different services provisions
   - 4.3. Guidebook for Complaints Hearing Mechanisms

Social Accountability in Action

Mahuli Community Development Centre (MCDC) used participatory budget analysis to educate citizens in 5 VDCs in Saptari about their rights and entitlements.

The Context and the Problems

Saptari district is the largest in Nepal with 114 VDCs and one municipality, and it is the second largest for a Dalit population. Mahuli Community Development Centre (MCDC) is interested to work in 5 VDCs (Bakadhuwa, Jandol, Thelya, Parasboni and Sitapur) where there are large numbers of people who are unaware of their rights and entitlements. As with other parts of Nepal VDCs are responsible for the overall development and promotion of the targeted communities of women, children, Dalits and Janjatis, as well as ensuring the participation of people in formulating and implementing the budget. According to the operational guidelines of the Government of Nepal. In reality, however, these procedures are not carried out, and the development of the targeted people has, for a long time, been held back. MCDC considers that Participatory Budget Analysis will help a great deal in improving public service delivery and wants to carry out orientation and training for it in collaboraton with Ward Citizens Forums (WCF) Citizen Awareness Centres (CAC), local CBOs, youth organizations, the media and political parties.

What actually happened?

Ward Citizens Forums are a structure set up through a government program called LGCDP – Local Governance Community Development Program. They are a valuable grass roots grouping, but often have not been very effective. MCDC was happy to work with this structure, forming 18 new ones in 5 VDCs, reforming 27 existing ones, and forming 5 VDC level Citizen Forums Networks (CFN) which were recognized by the VDC as bodies to initiate participatory budget analysis. MCDC oriented and trained the CFNs on the participatory project planning process.

The next step was particularly targeted to womens role in local level planning. 58 women out of 105 members of CFNs from 5 VDCs were trained to understand the 10% of the VDC budget that is specifically meant for women. All understood that in order to use such funds for their welfare, they had to understand the budget and know how to use it.

135 WCF/CFN members became capable of managing participatory planning, budget analysis and project prioritization, and started to lobby for their rights with the VDC.

All their activities were broadcast of local FM radio.

What does this illustrate?

It illustrates that it is possible to invigorate local citizens so that they decide to take part in the due process of participatory planning and budgeting of the VDC budget as allowed by law, but which has not happened for many years. It is also possible to set up networks of local citizens, particularly involving Dalits and Women to argue for their rights and entitlements and have such bodies bodies were strong enough to compel the VDC secretary to undergo a public audit. It also illustrates that social accountability can invigorate the Ward Citizens Forums of the LCGDP and make them a valuable tool for accessing citizens rights.

The Citizens Ward forum of Ward 8 of Bakdhuwa VDC, for instance, decided to monitor the work of the local schools, VDC and government offices. The monitoring team found that the Principal of

National Lower Secondary School of Ratwala had embezzled NRps 250,000 and not paid salaries to a the local teachers. Their advice was to pay teachers their due salaries if they wanted teachers to attend their duties regularly.

Another example is from the Ward Citizens Forum of Thelia who had received a project for Rps 132,000 for construction of a 2 km road. With assistance from MCDC, the WCF decided to form a Consumer's Committee in respect of this project and they fought hard not to have to pay the usual 20% commission to the VDC secretary for receiving the funds for this road. The VDC secretary claimed that such commissions were common and should continue, but the Consumers Committee found no legal backing for this claim and refused to pay it. Parbati Sada, the woman who had undergone training by MCDC, finally received the full amount (see picture).

What does this lead to?

This leads to a feeling of greater knowledge on the part of the target communities about what are their rights and entitlements and a greater sense of empowerment about what they can do to claim these. MCDC reports that there has been a considerable change in attitude on both sides following the training and orientation on participatory budgetting

What did not happen?

Initially the VDC secretaries were not enthusiastic about the work of MCDC , and there had to be a slow and gradual process of mutual education, as citizens leant their rights, and government officials learnt that the citizens had learn their rights, and were not going to accept the old ways of working. MCDC also said that the political parties were unenthusiastic about their work and were not willing to participate in trainings and workshops

How does this all illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study shows that PRAN can work with a locally based INGO (CECI) to identify high quality local CSOs to receive grants (Mahuli Commmunity Development Centre received a grant of $10,999 over 6 months); and this CSO can, in turn, with close collaboration from local CBOs, particularly the Ward Citizens Forums, bring about substantial changes in the way citizens, particularly women and dalits think of their rights and the behavior of malpractices or maladministration by government. MCDC and its collaborating CBO partners have succeeded in getting their rights and entitlement to be accepted, and setting up a system for this to continue, and have done this against opposition from many government officials. MCDC claim that 1130 people are direct beneficiaries, and, with the use of radio, 2123 are indirect beneficiaries.

Productions from Mahuli Community Development Centre

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Once citizens become alert, improvement is possible
   - 2.2. Parbati Sada, Dalit woman, shows the way to stop paying commission

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Participatory Budget Analysis

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Sampling Survey Report
   - 4.2. FM Radio broadcast

Social Accountability in Action

Pro Civil Society (PCS) mobilizes youth to manage two tools (CRC and CSC) in Dhading which produce improvements in a range of different government agencies

The Context and the Problems

As is usual in Nepal there is a gap between what government agencies should be doing, and what they are actually doing. Pro-civic Society spent a lot of time explaining their ideas to the government agencies in order to make sure that they considered their intended work to be a useful exercise, and one that they would support. Government officials said "We have been doing the same activities for a long time, and do not know what is succeeding and what is failing – these two social accountability tools will help us to know what needs to be improved". Pro-civic Society took on two very comprehensive surveys and were able to repeat both of them during the period of the program in order to objectively assess impact. The VDCs and Municipalities were the project was implemented were : Nikantha, Muralibhanjyang, Sankosh, Dhuwakot, Sunaulabazar, Maidi, Chainpur, Salyantar.

What actually happened?

a. Citizens Report Card

The CRC survey covered 500 service receivers from five public service providers – District Agriculture Office (DAO), District Development Committee (DDC), District Agricultural Development office (DADO), Land Revenue Office LRO), and District Livestock Service Office (DLSO). The survey was carried out by 10 volunteers from CBOs. The results of the Survey were written up and shown to the respective officials and the LDO, and were broadcast on the radio. Six months later the CRC was repeated and the results again shown to the respective agencies and broadcast widely. Clear improvement andchanges were seen in DADO, DLSO and LRO, and smaller improvements in DAO, and DDC. In total the citizens' satisfaction with the service received increased from 50.6% to 68.4%. It was also noted that corruption was reduced due to the attention that was generated by the project.There was good coordination with the line agencies and with the Chief District officer (CDO)

Concrete Achievements:
The first CRC survey found that 17.8% had to pay bribes to get services from these agencies (of which 69% was for DLO). By the time of the second CRC survey it was down to 8.8% (of which 28% for DLO)

b. Community Score Card

The CSC was conducted in three VDCs on three issues (Community Edication, Public health, and Community Forestry)based up on Salyantar Higher Secondary School, Salbas Health Post, Chainpur, and Womens Community Forestry group in Maidi. The CSC was facilitated by 6 trained volunteers. After the first session of the CSC, plans were agreed for implementation of the Action Plan agreed. The exercise was was repeated after three months and achievements of 6 % omprovement on community forestry, 10% on public health, and 20% on education

improvements were shown, and visible changes took place in the respective institutions. The process also made the beneficiaries, community people, and other concerned persons aware of the quality of public services they were receiving. Again Community FM radio was involved in disseminating the results of the CSC. The CSC has already empowered community members to raise questions about the services they are receiving

In general the two SA tools were valuable and effective and were very well received by both citizens and by government officials.

What does this illustrate?

Once citizens and government officials are given the opportunity to get involved in practical steps for improving services, there can be very creative.

Education:

a. Form a Childrens Committee to collect complaints and suggestions from the students
b. Set up a Complaint/Suggestion Box for students and parents who do not want to complain directly

Health:

a. Set up a schedule for staff movement publicly
b. Arrange to provide income and expenditure details of the health post if people ask for it.

Agriculture

a. Provide toll free number for farmers to contact DADO
b. Set up an audio citizens charter for illiterate people

What does this lead to?

This leads to an aware citizenry who are clear that change is possible and that they can be age agents of change. It also leads to government officials realizing that suggestions from service receivers can be helpful and instructive. Finally the involvement of the youth is likely to be a continuing strength for social accountability in the district.

What did not happen?

There was no punishment for past bad performance, but only pressure for people to behave better in the future, together with a letter from the LDO to urge improvements in service delivery. Time will tell if the improvements continue.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN responded to a proposal from a local CSO (Pro Civil Society) which wanted to use the tool of Citizens Report Card in Dhading as a whole and the Community Score card in 3 VDCs of Dhading District. It funded the CSO to apply its knowledge; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $10,646 and took 6 months, had 1221 direct beneficiaries, and 4820 indirect beneficiaries. PCS negotiated with the 5 government offices and carried out 2 CRCs at 6 month intervals and worked with three institutions in Health, Education, and Forestry to carry out 1 CSCs at 3 month intervals. Citizens are now aware of what his happening, and what they can do to improve things.

Productions from Pro Civil Society

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Reform in a school – Salyantar Higher Secondary
   - 2.2. Changes at District Agriculture Development Office

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Citizens Report Card
   - 3.2. Community Score card

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Brief Information bulletin of CRC
   - 4.2. Brief Information bulletin of CSC
   - 4.3. CRC Report of Five Major Government Offices of Dhading-2069
   - 4.4. CRC Training Manual

Social Accountability in Action

Radio Chinnamasta uses the medium of community FM radio (in both Maithili and Nepali) to teach people how to demand accountability from Rajbiraj Municipality

The Context and the Problems

Since the establishment of community radios in Nepal 14 years ago, 230 have established themselves as credible, fair, and socially responsive media that has substantially changed the landscape of the media in Nepal by allowing for more pluralism and freedom of expression. In many rural areas , these radios are the only form of media available and they have been providing services to the marginalized and disadvantaged that have been ignored by mainstream radio.

Radio Chinnamasta decided to use community radio as the mechanism through which it would encourage citizens of Rajbiraj Municipality to hold the Municipality accountable for delivering their rights and responsibilities, and teach the Municipality to be aware of what it should be doing for the citizens in its area. In particular they used the mechanism of a Citizens Charter to clarify what needed to be done – and they also focused on particular issues that were important to local citizens, and achieved change – one was the filth caused by unfettered pigs (see illustration), and another was the re-organisation of illegal roadside shops which prevented vegetables from being delivered to the markets.

What actually happened?

Radio Chinnamasta broadcast 20 episodes of radio programs on issues of social accountability and good governance which informed citizens in the coverage area of the services of the Municipaity and the intended project activities.

As citizens became more aware of the Municipalities responsibilities, they also became more knowledgeable of the issues through orientatiion programs, focus group discussions, interaction and discussion with the Municipal authorities and Public hearings organised by Radio Chinnamasta.

Capturing stray pigs in Rajbiraj Municipality to clean up the town

Citizens actively campaigned for Citizens Charters to be written and displayed resulting in baords in Nepali and Maithali languages and audio versions being set up in the Municipality compound.

Discussions with the Municipal authorities resulted in setting up a grivance redressal mechanism and the Municipality appointed one of their staff to record grievances and follow up, and act as a help desk.

With encouragement of Radio Chinnamasta the Municipality formed 5 voluntary Citizen Awareness Groups (CAG) to decease the communication group between the Municipality and the citizens, which resulted in much greater dialogue and the participation of the citzens in the Municipality's planning and decision making processes. The Chief of the Municipality took a positive role in improving municipal services and building better relations with citizens.

Each time a particular issue was discussed and solutions found this increased the enthusiasm and commitment of both sides to greater accountability and better governance.

What does this illustrate?

When there is good will from both sides, it is not difficult to change attitudes that have been in place for many years. It also illustrates the very great power of radio for social accountability, providing the management of the content of the radio is in the hands of a socially conscious organization committed to the improvement of the lives of the poor and marginalized. Radio Chinnamasta has said that considerable discussions and dialogues are required to bring consensus, but that once some achievements have realized, the enthusiasm and commitment from both sides increases.

What does this lead to?

This leads to an aware citizenry who become clear what their rights and entitlements are, and are prepared to ask the Municipality for answers to the lack of them. It also leads to three ongoing institutions which are likely to continue beyond the life of the project:

- The writing and display of a citizens charter which for many people, for the first time, illustrates what services are due to them. The fact that this was written in two languages (Mathili and Nepali) with an audio version for non-literates means that this public education is much more thorough.
- The setting up (by the Municipality) of 5 Citizens Awareness groups to act as the link between the Municipality and the citizens
- The setting up (again by the Municipality) of a help desk and a grievance redressal mechanism – with a Municipal official designated to manage it.

Woman speaking up at Public hearing and being recorded for Radio Chinnamasta program

All of this is underlined and backstopped by the regular use of Community Radio to tell all the citizens what is being done, and what is being achieved.

What did not happen?

Radio Chinnamasta underlines that the initial process of getting agreement to the project was not easy. Government officials were not used to such a way of working, and citizens were not used to making complaints officially and openly about problems and issues. People were initially not ready to put their name to complaints in radio phone in programs. Radio Chinnamasta also pointed out the the Citizens Awareness Groups while operational and active, have not been formally instituted by the Municipality.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

PRAN responded to a proposal from a local CSO (Radio Chinnamasta) which wanted to use the tools of Citizens Charter and Public Hearings in Rajbiraj Municipality. It funded the CSO to apply its knowledge; and provided it with back up educational materials. The project cost $10,760 and took 6 months, had 1124 direct beneficiaries, and 50,000 indirect beneficiaries. Radio Chinnamasta negotiated with the municipal offices and carried out considerable civic education through their radio programs. Citizens are now aware of what his happening in this municipality, and what they can do to improve things.

PRAN is a program of the World Bank in Nepal, promoting the use of social accountability tools to make sure that the citizens can hold the government accountable. It works through 3 Nepali partner organisations – ProPublic for Training, SAP Nepal for Knowledge dissemination and Networking, and TMS for monitoring and research ; and 1 INGO, CECI for Grant making.
Please contact www.worldbank.org/np/pran for more information.

Productions from Radio Chinnamasta

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Controlling stray pigs
   - 2.2. Improving road access for vegetable shops

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Citizens Charter
   - 3.2. Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Nepali Citizens Charter
   - 4.2. Maithili Citizens Charter
   - 4.3. Radio script
   - 4.4. Sample radio program
   - 4.5. Recorded audio charter

Social Accountability in Action

Rastiya Rogjar Pawardhan Kendra working with Ward level bodies dominated by Janjatis and Dalits persuade the Municipal authorities in Maelengwa (Sarlahi District) to change their way of working.

The Context and the Problems

RPPK (Rastiya Rogjar Pwardhan Kendra) decided to work in the 2 of the 10 wards in Maelengwa municipality with the highest proportion of Janjatis and Dalits (80%), many of whom spoke Maitiliya as their first language. Such people had never been invited by the municipality to participate in ward or municpaility level meetings to discuss participatory planning or participatory budgeting Women, janjatis and Dalits had no idea what plans had been approved and what budgets were available for their wards. They also had little knowledge of how the municipality worked and were unaware that for two years the Maelengwa Municipality had not passed the MCPM (Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures) – the monitoring tool of Municipality performance which decided supplementary funding.

In conversation between RPPK and the Municipality officials, RPPK were told that the Municipality was under the control of political parties and they were unable to reform the situation – they would welcome RPPK's help in getting citizens' participation to overcome this problem

What actually happened?

RPPK determined to involve the citizens of the 2 most marginalized wards in participatory planning and budgeting. They started by holding a district level consultative meeting in which district level and municipal level officials committed to help the process and provided detailed information about projects. RPPK then followed these by ward level consultative meetings(in Wards 6 and 10) at which RPPK explained their plans for training and awareness raising through social accountability tools and received the commitment of the citizens to this plan. There followed monthly meetings of the Ward Citizens Forum (see picture) at which RPPK explained the way the municipal government worked, what participatory planning and budgeting meant, what the Minimum Standards of Performance were and why Maelengwa was failing.

The citizens, as they started to understand more about participatory approaches, interacted with the municipal officials. At first these officials did not want to have face to face meetings with citizens, but the newly empowered citizens insisted. The work was broadcast throughout the District by FM radio and 2000 copies of a brochure (in Nepali and Maitiliya) explaining MCPM were printed and distributed. One of the Ward Citizen Forums participants said "We were prepared to gerao the municipal offices to make sure of our participation in council meetings".

The common objective of passing the MPCM and getting more funds for Mailengwa was a unifying factor in RPPK's campaign.

What does this illustrate?

d. The Municipality, in spite of regulations to the contrary, did not inform its constituency about their right to be involved in participatory planning and budgetting, and carried out its business in secret, heavily influenced by political parties.
e. The power of FM radio in informing people of their rights and entitlements is substantial – and this goes far beyond the immediate beneficiaries of the CSOs work.
f. A CSO, once trained in social accountability and funded to apply such learning, can help citizens at grass roots level understand how local government works, and ensure their active participation in activities to change corrupt practices (see picture)

g. In situations where the local government body is failing MCPM, the aim of succeeding at the MCPM, can be a unifying objective of citizens and municipal council alike.

What does this lead to?

This leads to citizens understanding their role within the legal provisions of local government, understanding elements of local government practices, and ensuring commitment that they will participate as is their right, and hold the local government bodies accountable for the implementation of the jointly agreed plans and budgets.

Where the CSO is able to convince the council officials and the citizens to trust each other, to attend meetings together and to learn collaboratively, there is a very good chance of building good working relations. RPPK staff said that Municipal officials who they met socially told them "you are making a lot of trouble for us", but that these concerns were overcome by regular interactions with Municipal Council officials. Ward level citizens found common cause with Municipal officials in trying to apply the laws and to keep political parties from dominating municipal affairs. The ward citizen's forums were clear that their commitment to participating in local governance would not stop with the PRAN project. The radio and the booklets had generated their own momentum and this would continue.

What did not happen?

There did not seem to be any counter pressure from political parties as their power was eroded, and there was no descent into violence, although gerao was threatened.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

- PRAN trained a local CSO, RPPK, in social accountability, particularly in Participatory plannnning and budgeting who in turn trained ward level citizens in these topics while managing carefully the relationship with the Municipal council.
- The local level CSO, RPPK made sure that the project was strongly supported by the people such that the Municpal Council felt that it was in their best interests to attend joint meetings, provide information and accept citizens recommendations

PRAN's purpose of promoting social accountability through trained and funded CSOs has resulted in over 5,000 people in two wards of Maelangwa Municipality, mostly belonging to Janjati and Dalits, being made aware of their rights as citizens to be part of local governance , and being determined to make sure that they play this role in the future..

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Please contact www.worldbank.org/np/pran for more information.

Productions from Rastiya Rojgar Prawardhan Kendra

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Once citizens become alert, improvement is possible
   - 2.2. Parbati Sada, Dalit woman, shows the way to stop paying commission

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Participatory Budgeting
   - 3.2. Participatory Planning

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Brochure on minimum condition and performance measures of Municipality (MCPM)
   - 4.2. Book on Good Municipal Governance in Malangwa

Social Accountability in Action

RRDC (Reconstruction and Research Development Centre) worked in Mugu District and particularly with Sreenagar Municipality to help citizens understand government processes for public service delivery in an area with great communication difficulties.

The Context and the Problems

When RRDC started working in Mugu, everyone seems to have agreed that the situation in the government offices was chaotic – when people had walked many days to come to the government offices, they found no information to help them know to whom they should turn, unfriendly government officials who were tired of explaining the processes to many individuals, and a general lack of information about what services were (or were not) available to the citizens. Mugu is in the Mid West of Nepal and contains 24 VDCs, but is geographically very isolated with little surface transportation. Citizens were not only interested to know what services were available to them, but also to learn how they could participate in the planning and budgeting of those services, and how they could complain if they did not receive the services. A particularly acute problem was the situation of the health posts – these were frequently unattended (forcing people to use expensive private clinics), and provided out of date medicine.

What actually happened?

RRDC started with interactions in 6 workshops between the citizens and the VDCs and DDCs. This led to a demand for Citizens Charters and 24 VDCs agreed to put up citizens charters, as well as 4 line agencies at the DDC level (see below). All of this was covered by 12 local community radio programs. Participants also committed to develop pocket citizens charters.

It was then decided that the most efficient way to proceed was to make a model out of Shreenagar VDC: a participatory planning workshop, and a participatory budgeting workshop was held there and a model document prepared that could be used in other VDCs. A one year plan and budget was drawn up based on identified existing assets and planned activities. The participants and the VDC secretary committed to pass this plan and budget in the next VDC council.

25 Public Grievance Redressal Mechanisms (PGRM) were established in the 24 VDCs – and one at the DDC level. Each VDC level committee consisted of 5 members (including women, dalits, janjatis) who were not affiliated to political parties, and one at DDC level consisted of 9 people. The district level PGRM was made up of people from government, journalists, dalits, women, indigenous and ethnic groups. The main objectives of these VDC level PGRM Committees were to make the public aware of the regulations, to control and complain about illegal activities, corruption and illegal activities.

As a result of this work (particularly the citizens charters), government officials and citizens were very pleased. Citizens were clearer about what was on offer, and did not have to request information from so many different places, while government officials were happy because they could provide services more effectively than previously.

A particular result came from the District Health Office which, in response to grievances from the citizens about poor services in the health posts, sent a warning letter to the Health Post staff promising retribution for absences from work, and promising to close down illegal private clinics. RRDC considered that a great deal more would have been possible if there had been more time, and if the district had not been so difficult to cross. Further RRDC regretted that nothing had been done about illiterate citizens who could not read Citizens charters.

What does this illustrate?

This illustrates that a community and government services can sink into a downward spiral of inefficiency and incompetence in which all are dispirited and disaffected. The work of a CSO to inspire people to believe that improvements are possible, followed by specific orientation to participatory practices and grievance mechanisms, focusing on the role of women, dalits and janjatis, can make a large difference. In particular citizen's charters are a catalyst to help citizens understand how the government's services work, how they can be accessed, and how their absence can be contested. In all of this the role of community radio in spreading the benefits of such social accountability training more widely is well noted.

What does this lead to?

This leads to self educating citizens using the citizen's charters to avail themselves of the existing and legitimate government services, self perpetuating citizens PGRM Committees, and a model of a VDC participatory planning and budgeting mechanism, pioneered in Sreenagar which can be adapted more widely.

What did not happen?

Not enough happened. RRDC was well aware that it could have moved beyond Sreenagar and oriented/trained/educated more citizens in participatory techniques. They ascribed this limitation to a short project period, and difficulties of access between the VDCs within Mugu.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

- PRAN trained a local CSO, RRDC, in social accountability, particularly in Participatory planning and budgeting, preparation of Citizens Charters, and Public Grievance Redressal mechanisms. They in turn trained VDC level citizens in these topics while managing carefully the relationship with the DDC. It cost $ 10,985 over 6 months.
- RRDC showed some examples of how this new found empowerment could work by getting improvements made in the conduct of the Health Posts.

Productions from Reconstruction and Research Development Centre (RRDC)

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Health issues of the Katiyard Belt
   - 2.2. Impact of the Citizen Charter in Mugu District.

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Participatory Budgeting and Participatory Planning
   - 3.2. Public Grievance Redressal Mechamism
   - 3.3. Citizens Charters

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. Radio programs
   - 4.2. Materials for the Citizens charters
   - 4.3. Participatory Planning and Budgetting documents
   - 4.4. Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism documents

Social Accountability in Action

RRAFDC (Rural Regional and Agro-forestry Development Centre), Bara, clarified how the VDC budgets were meant to work in 9 VDCs and 1 municipality, and succeeded in getting projects implemented with social audits where this had not happened before.

The Context and the Problems

The VDCs in Bara were in poor shape: only 69 out of the 98 VDCs there passed the Minimum Standards Performance Measure and the Bara DDC failed this 2 times in 4 years. Government funds for infrastructure projects were spent without reference to the people, and using the wrong budget heads - under the influence of political parties, and local elites: VDC secretaries were very unpopular and kept out of their offices: local people had very little faith in the government officials. Poor and marginalized people had no opportunity to get involved with funding that was meant for them. As an example, a road that was important for the Khutwa Jabdi VDC, and which had a budget already allocated for it, had never been built because of in-fighting over who should receive the commissions involved, people had been unable to agree to the construction of a pond that all recognized was important.

What actually happened?

RRAFDC announced that they were going to initiate a program of "zero tolerance" of corruption together with a substantial amount of training of the local people in how the VDC budget worked and what were people's rights in terms of participatory planning and budgeting. An analysis of the expenditures of 10 VDCs were organized, followed by a district level and then village level workshops. 10 public discussions and interactions were held, 10 public audits, and 10 public hearings (see picture).

RRAFDC took a lot of trouble to use these events as opportunities to build trust and harmony and encourage a common commitment between service providers and service receivers to agree to reduce corruption. VDC secretaries were persuaded to disclose the VDC budgets, and the due process of getting citizens participation in planning for projects was implemented and the results forwarded to the DDC.

It was not all so simple – some VDC secretaries were reluctant to participate because they feared their exposure might lead to confrontation, and some members of user committees were reluctant to organize public auditing and public hearings for the same reason. However, a new spirit was born in Bara and people started to look for solutions to their problems rather than concentrating on problems – a road in Khuttawa VDC was built after many years delay, an agreement was reached on building a pond in Rampur Tokni VDC, Kalaiya Municipality publicly displayed their plan for the next year, health posts distributed medicines which they had not done before, the people of Bhaluhi Bharbaliya benefitted from visits of a livestock technician that they had not seen for 4 years, and Dalits and Janjatis became brave enough to complain about bad practices that had been continuing for a long time.

RRAFDC took a lot of trouble to make sure that all could participate in the various events, and that they felt able to talk openly. "I had never before received a letter addressed to my name" said one

Dalit man about his invitation to a public hearing. The local newspaper, KREEPA, documented the rebuilding of social trust, particularly about the building of the pond.

What does this illustrate?

It illustrates that mutual suspicion and a lack of trust in a VDC between the citizens and the elites can be reduced if a public spirited CSO takes a wide ranging approach to trying to change people mind sets – moving from mutual accusations to willingness to collaborate. Such changes in mind set, however, are based on clear orientation and training to people about their rights and their entitlements, and a readiness of all involved to work together to acknowledge difficulties and seek solutions – and give commitments to a new way of working (see picture). Even those who were apprehensive about public hearings, found them to be a positive force.

What does this lead to?

5 campaigns for zero tolerance of corruption were carried out and this was done with the involvement of the Ward Citizens Forums and the Citizens Awareness Centres who committed to continuing to do them in the future. The knowledge that citizens received both from the training of RRAFDC, and from what they learnt at the public audits and public hearings will not disappear. Citizens now know what they are entitled to and are enthusiastic to play their role in local planning.

What did not happen?

RRAFDC said that more could have happened if they had had more time. Poor and marginalized members of society professed their desire to become involved in local level planning, but this has not yet been seen. A change in attitude amongst those benefitting from the past situation – the elites and the politicians – is admirable, though surprising, and has to be demonstrated. One wonders whether all stakeholders will have the resolve to make sure that the new ways of working continue into the future – citizens demanded clear commitments from service providers.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the following:

- PRAN trained a local CSO, RRAFDC, in social accountability, particularly in Zero Corruption Tolerance, and Public Financial Management using public hearings and public audits. RRAFDC, in turn, trained VDC level citizens in many different aspects of social accountability while managing carefully the relationship with the VDCs, particularly the VDC secretaries. It cost $ 32,440 over 6 months.
- The careful use of social accountability can make a surprisingly large change in a community, bringing together people who had previously been suspicious and distrustful of each other, and encouraging others to turn over a new leaf in their work. It needs to be done with sensitivity – for instance RRAFDC changed their campaign title from "Zero Corruption" to "Zero Tolerance of Corruption" to make it more acceptable.

Productions from Rural Regional and Agro-Forestry Development Centre (RRAFDC)
1. Project Completion report
2. Case Studies: 2.1. Constructing a pond - transparently 2.2. Building a road – the VDC allocated the work genuinely for the first time.
3. Tool Briefs 3.1. Public hearing 3.2. Public Auditing 3.3. Zero Tolerance Campaigns
4. Other Reports/materials produced 4.1. None

Social Accountability in Action

Sahara Nepal trained local people in public expenditure tracking, discovered misspending of funds for women and socially excluded, and got the money returned.

The Context and the Problems

The VDCs of Kanda and Rilu in the District of Bahjang (along with the rest of Nepal) have not had local councillors elected since 2001. In the absence of elected councillors, the VDC secretaries act both as government officials managing local government, and representatives of the citizens. They are, however, usually members of the elite and do not represent the citizens. They are 'advised' by the members of the All Party Mechanism (APM) which represents political parties and is formed, similarly, from village elites. While all APMs have been formally abolished because of their contribution to corruption, their actors and activities continue.

Nepal's budget provides resources to the poor and marginalized, and, on paper, an adequate participatory local governance system to check on its expenditure. However, this often does not work in reality. Representatives of poor and marginalized, while they have the right to attend the meetings of local governance bodies, are rarely involved in decision making, and, most importantly, do not know the composition the budget and how it is spent. PRAN trained a local CSO, Sahara Nepal, in participatory budget monitoring and public expenditure tracking so that they, in turn, could educate the poor and marginalized about the VDC budget and their part in it.

What actually happened?

Sahara Nepal sought to discover the VDC budget from the VDC secretary and was only able to do so by threatening to use the Right to Information Act . Once they knew the budget allocations, they systematically informed the citizens of Rilu and Kanda of these and quickly discovered that allocations for women's empowerment (Rps 192,000), senior citizens and the disabled (Rps72,000) had not been spent on these topics, but illegally transferred to budgets for infrastructure and administration. The citizens angrily confronted the VDC with the facts and demanded that these funds be restored to their proper purpose.

After getting the training, I found out that every year the VDC had been allocating the budget for womens development but I never got it and I knew nothing about it.
Timari Devi Rokaya (28) Kanda

Sahara Nepal mediated between the two parties, but also told the whole story to Saipal FM, a local community radio who broadcast it throughout the Bahjang district - and reported the situation to the LDO. The LDO sent a circular letter to government departments that such behavior should cease, and Sahara Nepal was able to persuade the relevant government officials to return the funds to their intended purpose. The local citizens determined that they would use their legal rights and processes to obtain their due entitlements in the future.

What does this illustrate?

Firstly, that in spite of a well designed participatory system of local governance, poor and marginalized people do not, in reality play their role, and all decisions are made by local elites: secondly, that an active CSO, well trained in social accountability tools, can get access to important budget information, pass it on to the citizens, help them understand it, and help them demand

restoration of their entitlements: thirdly, that officials, when confronted with public knowledge of their corrupt practices can be persuaded to return their illegal income without violence, and fourthly, that poor and marginalized citizens can be educated about their due role in local governance by a trained CSO, and determine to practice this role in the future.

According to Sahara Nepal, it also illustrates that the formal structures for citizen's participation and transparency - social audits and public hearings - are simply rituals where the opinions of the poor and marginalized are ignored.

In earlier VDC council meetings whatever the elite people and VDC secretary decided, I had to accept. After getting the training from Sahara Nepal about social accountability tools and techniques, all the Dalit community realized that Local Grant Mobilization Procedure 2067 was not followed properly by VDC council.

Gothya Agri (Rilu)

What does this lead to?

Formal and informal local institutions (ward citizen forums, citizens awareness centres, youth clubs, mothers clubs etc) can be educated to understand local budgets, and their role in monitoring its expenditure. They can be encouraged to take up their role as responsible citizens and make good local governance work in practice (as opposed to only on paper) by showing their determination for reform, but without violence. It also leads to corrupt government officials realizing that there are limits to their corrupt practices, and these limits are set by the poor and marginalized citizens once they are made aware of proper governance practices. Finally, it leads to poor and marginalized people learning of the power that they have once they have acquired information and learnt how to use it.

What did not happen?

A number of things did not happen: firstly, the anger of the cheated citizens at the loss of their entitlements was restrained by the CSO which negotiated a return of their due entitlements: secondly, the CSO did not have to pursue the process of RTI in order to receive information on the VDCs' budget, but merely to threaten its use - civil servants were aware of its potential power. Thirdly, the poor and marginalized people of Rilu and Kanda did not decide to prosecute the corrupt officials to make sure that such corruption would not occur again, but accepted that their ability to fully engage in local governance practices would prevent its recurrence.

How does this illustrate PRAN's purpose?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study illustrates the work of one CSO, Sahara Nepal which received a sub-grant of Rps 774,375 through CECI, one of PRAN's Partners. This grant was spent over 5 months (May 2012 to Sept 2012).

Sahara Nepal, which operates in Bahjang District, decided to use the tools of participatory budget monitoring and public expenditure tracking to educate the people of two VDCs (Rilu and Kanda) about their entitlements from the budget, and, once they discovered that amounts had been illegally stolen by government officials, were able to get these returned by public and media pressure. They were also able to empower local people to determine to use their legal role in local government to make sure this did not happen again. Direct beneficiaries were 308 and indirect beneficiaries were 15,000.

Productions from Sahara Nepal

1. Project Completion report

2. Case Studies:
   - 2.1. Misuse of the Social Security Fund of the VDC
   - 2.2. Opening the eyes of the Ward Citizens Forum

3. Tool Briefs
   - 3.1. Public hearing
   - 3.2. Public Auditing
   - 3.3. Zero Toerance Corruption campaigns

4. Other Reports/materials produced
   - 4.1. None

Social Accountability in Action

Vijaya Development Resource Centre worked with the Dept of Education and 21 Community schools in 13 Villages of Nawalaparasi District improve their services to students through the use of Community Score Cards

The Context and the Problem

In Nepal state education is provided through Community Schools which are free up to 8th grade, while there are also many private fee-paying schools. Community Schools are managed by voluntary School Management Committees (SMCs) under the supervision of the District Education Officers (DEOs). Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs) are also encouraged.

While the majority of teachers in Community Schools are full time civil servants, considerable numbers of teachers are on temporary contracts, hoping for subsequent long term permanent employment. Schools are funded through a Per Capita Fund (PCF): scholarship funds for secondary schools are made available by the Dept. of Education for children of marginalized parents.

VDRC (Vijaya Development Resource Centre) is a 33 year old CSO which has particularly worked in the education sector in Nawalparasi. VDRC identified the following blocks to good education through community schools:

- "Ghost" students to increase the PCF
- Scholarship funds being disbursed wrongly
- Primary level students being required to pay a fee
- Teacher absenteeism
- Student absenteeism
- Inadequate or broken infrastructure and facilities
- SMCs which do not know how to carry out their functions
- Heavy political party influence on SMCs.

What actually happened?

As part of PRAN, VDRC received grant support of $44,760 over 10 months to use the Citizens Score Card (CSC) mechanism to improve education in 21 Community Schools. In particular its objective was to:

- Make parents and students aware of their entitlements and the services that should be provided by community schools (see picture above)
- Enhance accountability of SMCs and school teachers in fulfilling their responsibilities and duties
- Establish good relations between service providers (teachers) and service receivers (parents) in order to improve the educational situation.

VDRC explained their aims for this project to the District Education Officer and got his enthusiastic agreement, then collected basic information from 21 schools, and carried out the Community Score Card exercise in each school. The CRC involved a 6 step process, the most important of which was getting agreement between all stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, MoE officials, SMCs, and PTAs) about the issues that needed to be addressed.

VDRC went through two rounds of CSC and saw a substantial improvement in the second round. They then held a public consultation on the results of the CSC which involved all stakeholders The Director

General of the Dept of Education was also present. The enthusiasm and commitment generated by the CSC exercise led teachers, students, SMCs to operate better, but also led parents and government to improve the physical infrastructure of the schools, and their practical equipment.

What does this illustrate?

The CRC exercise is a valuable mechanism to get agreement from service receivers and service providers on an action plan. The use of the CRC in Nawalparasi did three things:

1. It got agreement from all stakeholders about the important issues affecting education
2. It presented service providers' and service receivers' points of view to the other
3. It ensured a joint commitment to an action plan for the issues both agreed were important.

Using this process, the varied stakeholders were able to come to agreement about issues that had been festering for a long time, and commit to their improvement. It showed that getting stakeholders to commit to the improvement of educational services in 21 schools is not only possible, but a substantial number of improvements were immediately undertaken.

What does this lead to?

The Dept of Education felt that the CRC methodology can be used in all other schools in Nawalparasi district, and the Director General of the Dept. of Education felt that the methodology is one which can help reform all of Nepal's schools. Service receivers are now aware of their entitlements, and that they can put their points of view to the school management. The CSO is recognized as providing valuable services to the government and the people.

What did not happen?

There was no retribution or punishment of any of the previous misdemeanors. No absentee teachers were sanctioned, no misuse of scholarship funds or the PCF was the subject of criticism. No one criticized the Dept of Education for letting things slide so badly. This poses the danger that those responsible for past malpractices may consider that they are immune in the future.

How does this illustrate PRAN's objectives?

PRAN is a World Bank project to promote social accountability through CSOs in Nepal. This case study shows that:

- PRAN can use the services of a locally based INGO (CECI) to identify quality local CSOs for grants; and these can, in turn, with mentoring, implement social accountability practices, particularly the Citizens Score Card, to improve Public Service Delivery.
- VDRC, through constructive engagement with the Government was allowed by the Dept of Education to carry out its data gathering, report card, and public consultation work.
- All stakeholders, including the Government, were impressed with the process and committed themselves to reform, and for this to be monitored through future CSC scoring. Interestingly, students were trained to monitor and score school performance (see picture above).
- PRAN's promotion of social accountability through well reputed CSOs has resulted in 21 schools in Nawalparasi being better managed and with quality services to the students and parents.

PRAN is a program of the World Bank in Nepal, promoting the use of social accountability tools to make sure that the citizens can hold the government accountable for their actions . It works through 3 Nepali partner organisations – ProPublic for Training, SAP Nepal for Knowledge dissemination and Networking ,and TMS for Monitoring and research; and 1 international NGO – CECI - for Grant Making. Please contact www.worldbank.org/np/pran for more information.

Productions from Vijaya Development Resouce Centre

1. Project Completion report

2. <u>Case Studies:</u>
   - 2.1. Impact of Community Score cardsin Shiva Higher Secondary School
   - 2.2. The School Gate remains shut after 1000 for all
   - 2.3. Leisure period is not meant for performing household or personal duties
   - 2.4. School time means school time – no more bunking off
   - 2.5. Now the joint monitoring Committee cleans the garbage

3. <u>Tool Briefs</u>
   - 3.1. Community Score card

4. <u>Other Reports/materials produced</u>
   - 4.1. Report prepared for dissemination workshop
   - 4.2. Video clips to showcase the process and product of the interventions
   - 4.3. Community Score card Manual (in Nepali)